

CASHMERE: KASHIR THAT WAS YAAR-BAL

-----Somnath Sapru-----

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by Somnath Sapru

PART III

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Author's Note

Why Yaar-Bal?

There are three elements that effect us human beings and are vital to our survival---AIR, it is there all round us but invisible, WATER, it is there only in the form of rivers, streams and wells---without it we cannot survive and FOOD---that Mother Earth helps us to grow and harvest, so that we get the nourishment to work.

Since times immemorial, most civilizations have developed and prospered on the banks of rivers. Whether it was Mohenjodaro or Harappa in India or the Egyptian civilization by the river Nile, or the Roman by the river Tiber, or the British by the river Thames, just to name a few, water had to be close by. It was the elixir of life. Only after that would prosperity follow. When wandering tribes searched for a place to set their roots, they always looked for water.

Take the case of River Jhelum or Vyeth as we call it. On the river, banks were developed for use. Thus came up the waterfront or the ghat as we in India call it. If you look at the map you will see population spread not only in Srinagar city proper but other places too like Anantnag, Baramula, Sopore and other places where people have their homes either by the side of the water or near about.

How did this narrative get the name YAAR-BAL? Consulting an expert Colonel Makhan Lal Sapru on Kashmir and Kashmiri, the following emerged:

“ Yaar-Bal is a compound of two words, yaar and Bal which means a place, occurs in Kashmiri words like Ahra-bal, Gandher-bal, Hazrat-bal. The possible origin of yaar and bal in the antique Kashmiri word yaar-bal are not Persian because bal does not occur in Persian and because the Persian word yaar could not hve gained currency in Kashmiri language before the 13th century AD.

Before the 13th century, there had to be an old Kashmiri word for the river bank which was used as the pleasant place for strolling about. And the word used for the river bank was VIHAAR-BAL.

VIHAAR is a Sanskrit word meaning to play or to roam about for amusement. With the passage of time, VIHAAR changed to VYEHAAR just as VISTAAR chanded to VYESTAAR. Later, it dropped ‘V’ sound to become YEHAAR which further rounded off into the form YAAR.”

-Colonel M L Sapru

Thus, we the KASHMIRI PANDITS, THE ORIGINAL INHABITANTS OF THE KASHMIR VALLEY THAT KASHYP RISHI GAVE US, LIVED BY THE SIDE OF THE WATER FRONTS OR BY THE YAAR-BAL...

KASHIR WITHOUT YAAR-BAL IS UNTHINKABLE, AND SO THE NARRATIVE ON CASHMERE OR KASHMIR OR KASHIR CANNOT BE TAKEN UP WITHOUT THE EVERPRESENT YAA-RBAL.

HENCE THE NAME

SOMNATH SAPRU

Contents

1.	Kashyap Rishi's Bhoomi	06
2.	“Yemen Sattan Kadalun Munz”: Within These Seven Bridges	13
3.	Of Things Native	21
4.	The Way We Were	27
5.	The Way Things Were	33
6.	Lifelines	50
7.	The Healing Touch	55
8.	The Biscoe Age: “In All Things Be Men”	60
9.	The English Era : Language Is The Key	84
10.	Pandits & The Steel Frame	93
11.	Limb Of Law	106
12.	The maker of Shali Store	120
13.	The Long And The Short Of The Story Is That Family Saga-I	125
14.	Family Saga-2 : The Romance Of Durbar Move	138
15.	Surnames And Nicknames	180
16.	Our Icons	188
17.	Our Icons In The Modern Days	196
18.	Martial Pandits	213
19.	What Others Say	239
20.	The Bridges Of Srinagar	249
21.	Gotra	264
22.	Wedding Bells	269
23.	Festivals	283
24.	Fragrance & Nostalgia	290
25.	Sikh-Pandit Ties	293
26.	The Kabailies Are Coming	296

27.	Eviction Unabated	307
28.	The Kashmiri Language	312
29.	Urdu – Whose Mother Tongue?	316
30.	Superstitions & Beliefs	322
31.	Sites Of Pandit Heritage	325
32.	Tomorrow Is Forever	336
	Epilogue	350
	APPENDICE	
	I. SURNAMEs and NICKNAMEs	351
	II. VOCABULARY	380
	III. BATTE GUZATT: Proverbs and Sayings	388
	IV. SOME BRITISH OFFICERS WHO SERVED IN KASHMIR	397
	V. KARKUN – THE LONG GRAY LINE	399
	VI. CHRONOLOGY	440
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	444

1

Kashyap Rishi's Bhoomi

The beautiful Valley of Kashmir, which is today witnessing blood-curdling events, caught the imagination of writers and poets as early as the 11th century, if not earlier. Kalhana, who wrote the history of Kashmir in verse around about the year 1149, has this to say:

“Such is Kashmir, the country which may be conquered by the force of spiritual merit but not by armed force...where there are not baths in winter: comfortable landing places on the river banks, where the rivers being free from aquatic animals are without peril; where realizing that the land created by his father is unable to bear heat the hot-rayed sun honours it by bearing himself with softness even in summer. Learning, high dwelling-houses, saffron, iced water, grapes and the like—what is commonplace there, is difficult to secure in paradise...”

Kashmir is a paradise on earth; this is how Kashmir has been described by renowned writers, both Indian and those from outside. One version has it that the name Kashmir is derived from Sanskrit meaning water and shimira meaning to drain. Geologists have confirmed that the valley was once a lake and when it dried up it became habitable. It is said that Buddhism came to Kashmir in the wake of Ashoka's conquest in 250 B.C and it is well known that Ladakh is still Buddhist by faith.

The Jammu and Kashmir state, to give it its full name, is the northern most part of India and has an area of 84,471 sq. miles. Much of the sufferings of its people are due to its extremely strategic location. The Kashmir valley is surrounded by hilly and mountainous terrain. The areas of Jammu, Poonch, Muzaffarabad, Gilgit, Baltistan and Ladakh constitute the ring of highlands that stand sentinel over the Valley and border on Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Sinkiang and Tibet parts of China. Only a few miles separate it from the territory of the USSR, the Central Asian Republics of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan being the nearest.

From our folklore

“In the earliest available version, the sixth or seventh century Sanskrit work, the **Nilmaturana**, the floor of the Kashmir Valley, the original home of all Kashmiri Pandits, was formerly a hollow filled with the waters of a lake called **Satisaras**. At some remote period in pre-historic times, **Jalodbhava** (literally, “Water-born”), a sea-monster who lived in the lake, began to trouble the inhabitants of the surrounding area. When the sage **Rishi Kashyap** heard of the monster, he decided to punish him, and implored **Brahma** and the other Gods to help him. The Gods answered **Rishi Kashyap's** prayer and came down to the lake to deal with **Jalodbhava**. When he refused to emerge from the lake, Lord **Vishnu** is said to have asked his brother, **Balabhadra**, to pierce the surrounding mountains and drain the lake. When the lake dried up, **Jalodbhava** was exposed and finally killed by **Vishnu**. **Rishi Kashyap** then peopled the land created by

the draining of the lake, the Kashmir Valley, with people of his own choice—the Kashmiris.

Modern interpretation

I suspect,” says Sir William Jones, “the whole fable of Kasyap and his progeny to be astronomical, and cannot but imagine that the Greek name Cassiopeia has a relation to it”. Mr. Maurice, in his “Indian Antiquities,” would identify Kasyapa with the Seth of Moses, and thinks that he was doubtless a Brahmin who flourished in the earliest ages of the world, invented the Indian system of astronomy, and formed its zodiac, himself being immortalized, though in a female form, and in a different mythology, in the Cassiopeia of our present sphere, one of the oldest of the constellations.

“He also thinks him to have been one of the divine sages who, according to the Hindu fable, went with Manu (Noah) into the ark fabricated by the command of Vishnu; and adds, moreover, his opinion, that whether antediluvian or postdiluvian, he was also probably the genuine Atlas of antiquity. Referring, however, my readers for the reasons of these surmises to the work itself, I would venture to give another and not improbable origin of the name, if it came from the West at all. Kush was the son of Ham, and grandson of Noah: Gen.x.8, “Cush begat Nimrod, he began to be mighty upon the earth.” Nimrod is supposed to be identical with Belus, the beginning of whose kingdom was Babel, i.e. Babylon, whence his name and power, and probably his descendants, must have spread over different countries to the eastward. Kashmir is called Kha-che-Yul by the Bultis, or Little Tibetians, and the natives are designed by them as Kha-chhe-pa by the Gilgitis. The word Kashmir is used both for the people and the country.

Historical writing

The isolation of the Kashmir Valley from the rest of India also contributed towards making Kashmir the only region of India where a tradition of historical writing is known to have existed in pre-Muslim times. Professor Bashyam in his paper on the Rajatarangini (or River of Kings), the oldest of the Sanskrit chronicles of Kashmir, calls it “the only attempt at true history in the whole of surviving Sanskrit literature”. Commenting on the uniqueness of Kashmir in having a tradition of historical writing, Professor Bashyam writes: “No definite reason can be given to explain why the chronicle as a literary form flourished in Kashmir while it did not exist elsewhere. It may be due in part to the fact that Kashmir is a sharply demarcated region of India, whose people early developed distinctive characteristics which gave them a stronger sense of nationalism than was found in other parts of the subcontinent, as a result of which their poets felt the urge to commit the history of Kashmir to writing.

The Kashmiri Pandit, Kusum Pant, 1987.

Rajatarangini, according To Vigne

“ The Rajatarangini, or History of the Rajahs of Kashmir; is (according to Mr.Prinsep) the only Indian history of any antiquity, and commences with an account of the desiccation of the valley by Kasyapa Muni, supposed to allude to the Deluge (Vide Wilson’s “Essay”). The country was entirely covered with water; in the midst of which resided the Demon Jala or Jewala Deo, the spirit god, who preyed upon mankind. It happened that Kashef, the son of Marichi, and, according to some, the grand son of Brahma, visited the country, lived in pious abstraction upon Mount Sumer, or Soma, turned his attention to the desolate appearance of the earth, and inquired the cause.

“The people told him of the residence of Jala Deo in Sati Sar, and his predatory incursions. Kashef lived a thousand years in austerity, upon the hill of Naubudan, near Hirapur; in consequence of which, Mahadeo (the great God of Creator) sent his servants, Vishnu and Brahma, to expel the demon. Vishnu was engaged in the conflict for 100 years; and at last opened the mountains at Baramula, by which the waters were drained off, and the demon was exposed, taken, and slain; whence the country is called Kashuf Sar, or the lake of Kashuf.

V.T.Vigne, Travells in Kashmir, Ladakh, Iskardo”, 1880.

WHO ARE THE KASHMIRIS?

According to myth, Kashmiris are believed to be the lost tribe of Israel, and Kashmir the Promised Land that Moses should have found but did not! This theory suggests that Jesus Christ, after being taken off the cross, was brought here by his disciples to recover at Aishmuqam near Pahalgam.

Aish is the local name for Isa (Jesus), and muqam means “the place of stay”, but aish also mean ‘enjoyment’, and is quite appropriate as a name for this pretty spot on the banks of the Lidder stream. It is believed that Christ was finally buried at Rozabal Khanyar in Srinagar. The name recorded on the shrine at Rozabal is Yuz Asaf, which according to the believers of this theory means Jesus, son of Joseph. Though this theory is a matter of some debate, there is no doubt that in spite of its mountainous terrain Kashmir has been remarkably accessible to outsiders. There is evidence of intercourse with the ancient Greek, Roman, and Persian civilizations, as well as those from other parts of India.

Some Kashmiris believe that the Pandavas of the great Hindu epic the Mahabharata lived and ruled here. In fact, the gigantic ruins of old temples in Kashmir are known as Pandav-Lari or the Houses of the Pandavas. In the third century BC, Kashmir came under Buddhist influence when Ashoka, the great Mauryan king, made Srinagar his capital. The zenith of Buddhist power in Kashmir was reached in the reign of king Kanishka, convener of the fourth Great Buddhist Council, which was attended by a large number of scholars, theoreticians and commentators.

Buddhism was followed by a revival of Hinduism and Kashmir was ruled by Hindu rulers till AD 1320. One of the most remarkable Hindu kings was Lalitaditya Muktapida of the

Karkota dynasty who ruled from AD 724 to 761. A great warrior, he is often compared to Alexander in his ambitions and successful military campaigns. The sweep of his conquests was such that his empire extended from Tibet in the north to the Deccan in the south and from Gujarat in the west to Bengal in the east. He also annexed vast areas of Central Asia.

Leji Batta

During the Muhammadan rule, some Brahmins were once given the option to either submit to the sword or take food prepared by a Musalman. They naturally quivered at the prospect of death and unwillingly accepted the latter alternative, but, in their anguish to reduce pollution to its minimum, made the Musalman cook rice in a new lej or earthen pot and when ready they took it out from the lej with their own hands and reluctantly ate it. They afterwards expiated for the forcible pollution by performing Prayashchitta but still, the Biradari, who were as punctilious as ever, ostracized them, condemning them for not having preferred death to losing their caste by pollution as thousands others had boldly done under such circumstances.

Their descendents are called Lejibate because of their ancestors having eaten food cooked by a Muhammadan in a lej. A stigma also attaches to the members of the caste known as Wurud or Purib who are the illegitimate offspring or are of a mixed union in which one of the parents is a Brahmin and the other a Khatri. No Brahmin will take food touched by a Lejibatte, Wurud or Purib.

In the time of Zain-ul-abdin, the Brahmins, who studied Persian and took to government service, were called Karkuns. With the advent of Sikh rule in 1819 A.D., some Karkuns began the study of Sanskrit literature again, and they were called Pandits. Karkuns do not intermarry with Bachabats. Those who are versed in astrology and draw up calendars, cast horoscopes and profess to prophecy further events are called Jotshis. The priests, who preside over Shiva worship, are called Gurins. The Panyechh are those who receive alms and other offerings connected with funeral obsequies. Their office is regarded as derogatory by the Bachabats as well as the Karkuns who, for this reason, look down on them and refuse to take food from their hands.

Why Kashmiri Pandits & not Kashmiri Brahmins

Actually, the appellation is a little over 200 years old. As per historical records, the decadent Mughal emperor, Mohammad Shah (1719-1748), applied it for the first time and that too at the behest of one of his most trusted and favourite courtiers, Shri Jai Ram Bhan, who was at that time considered to be the main representative of all those Kashmiri Pandits who had left the Valley to seek the patronage of the Mughal kings and got settled in Delhi and in some other adjoining cities permanently along with their families.”

By their administrative capabilities and command over the Persian language, these Pandits inveigled themselves into the good grace and favours of the Mughals and thereby considered themselves to be superior to other Brahmins. To maintain their superior position in society and to establish their higher claims and status to dominate other caste

groups, Shri Bhan prevailed upon Mohammad Shah to issue a “Shahi Ferman” (royal decree) identifying them as Kashmiri Pandits. This was just to maintain their distinct ethnic individuality from the other categories of Brahmins. After all, a superior breed is recognized all over the world.

Dr. B.N.Sharga, Koshur Samachar, Feb.2000.

GEOGRAPHY OF KASHMIR

The state of Jammu and Kashmir is a composite entity made up of six distinct regions of Jammu, the Kashmir valley, Ladakh, Baltistan, Gilgit and the Punjabi speaking Mirpur – Muzaffarabad region along the river Jhelum.

Three of the regions namely Baltistan, Gilgit and the so-called Azad Kashmiri except Kargil are under illegal Pakistan occupation since 1947-48. Of the remaining three regions, the Kashmir valley, which is pre-dominantly Muslim, is separated from the rest of the state by high Himalayan Mountains, which remain snow bound for three to six months in a year. That is why it has a distinct geographical, linguistic and cultural identity of its own. It has all through the history remained a separate kingdom or a separate province of various empires of Hindustan.

Normally, there are four seasons in year, but in Kashmir they have been further divided into six seasons given below:

Seasons’ Duration

Spring (Sonth) March 15 to May 15

Summer (Grishm) May 15 to July 15

Rainy season (Wahrat) July 15 to Sept 15

Autumn (Harud) Sept. 15 to Nov.15

Winter (Wande) Nov. 15 to Jan. 15

Severe winter (Sheshur) Jan. 15 to March 15

Kashmir valley is separated from the Pakistan occupied territory of the state by Uri-Titwal belt inhabited by Punjabi and Pahari speaking people who have little in common with the people of the valley.

Ladakh, except Kargil, which has been tagged on to it, since 1949, is predominantly Buddhist. It is linked with the Kishwar area of Jammu in the south, Lahaul Spiti area of Himachal Pradesh and Tibet in the East, Sinkiang province of China in the North and Baltistan, now under Pakistani control.

Aksai Chin, now under Chinese occupation, was a part of Ladakh.

Siachin Glacier lies between Baltistan and Ladakh and converges on Leh, the capital of Ladakh to Dogra. General Wazir Zorawar Singh moved into Ladakh from Jammu via Kishtwar and not via Kashmir valley, as is generally believed.

Jammu, the home of the Dogras, is predominantly Hindu. It stretches from Pathankot to Banihal with a population of about 4 million. It is economically viable. It is the link between Kashmir Valley and the rest of Hindustan.

Jammu And Kashmir State thus stands divided between Pakistan and Hindustan more or less on communal lines. Kashmir valley is the only Muslim region on the Indian side of the cease-fire line.

Crescent over Kashmir, Anil Maheshwari, 1993.

In America, the natives both in the north and the south are called the Red Indians, in Southern Africa the original inhabitants are called Bantu, in New Zealand they are called Maori and in Australia they are called Aborigines. In the case of Kashmir, Kashmiri Pandits being the original inhabitants the label of natives would quite fit them.

Cashmere, Kashmir, Kashmeer, Kushmir or Kushmere?

The Webster English Language Dictionary defines Cashmere as “Shawl, soft fabric of goats’ hair”. Only after that does it give the name and spelling as “Kashmir”.

Because of the Kashmiri Shawl connection with France the soft wool was identified as Cashmere and for some time the word was spelt so in writing, newspapers, journals, books etc., as late as the early 20th century, newspapers like The Times of India, Statesman & The Pioneer, and C&M Gazette spelt it so. However Kashmiris themselves pronounce it as Kushmir, and in Kashmiri the word is Kashir.

Jia Lal Kilam says in his book “The Kashmiri Pandit”: Pandit Raj Kak was appointed as Governor of Kamraj, but after a short time he was placed in charge of the Shawl department. He raised the income of this department from four lacs to twelve lacs.

“The Kashmiri shawl was much prized in Europe. Even Queen Victoria had made a rule to present a shawl as a wedding gift to any princess of royal blood, and thus its use came into vogue in England. But its chief market was France and the French traders used to depute their agents to Kashmir directly from France. The defeat of France in 1870 A.D in the Franco-Prussian war spelt ruin to the industry in Kashmir.

“The deputation of the French agents to Kashmir brought the Kashmiri Pandits face to face with European culture and literature. Hitherto their literary pursuits were limited to knowledge of Persian and Sanskrit, but now with fresh opportunities they began to study French and other European languages.”

One has to recall that in the 19th century French influence in Europe was so great, so much so that it became the language of diplomacy and communication between nations, a lingua franca, because of which Kashmir was spelt as Cashmere for which one of the catalysts was the shawl trade connection with the Valley. Hence, its use as the title of this book.

2

“YEMEN SATTAN KADALAN MUNZ”

Within these Seven Bridges

The lifestyle for generations of Kashmiri Pandits was frugal and in close harmony with nature. Kashmir is perhaps the only place where houses were designed to meet the changes in weather by using locally available material. Most traditional houses had thatched roofs. There was no cement concrete. The first layer of the roof was covered with birch bark, which provided not only cover, but also insulation during winter. Over this layer, was a thick coating of earth, which was pasted together with mud, that after drying would hold together and over a period of time one could see even grass and plants growing on the roof. During winter and the rainy season, surplus water would drain off and even a snowfall would not be able to penetrate the roof.

The design of the house was such that no matter how poor the owner and how small the house, it had to have three separate distinct divisions. The ground floor usually had on the right side the living room where the family gathered to eat, children played and neighbours and visitors would drop in for a chat. This was called “wot”. Adjacent to it was the kitchen. The first floor of the house contained the bedrooms for sleeping. The second floor of the house was an exact replica of the ground floor with a living room and a kitchen. This was called “kaeni”. Due to severe winters, the ground floor was used during the cold season. As soon as summer came, the family would shift to the second floor. This was an ideal arrangement. Unfortunately, cement concrete has totally pushed this practical and useful arrangement out.

Between 1877 and 1927 is a time span of half a century. In 1877, there were no cars and no telephones. All transportation was done by tongas, carriages and carts. The Valley was cut off for more than six months in a year due to snow from the Jammu side, but fortunately, the Muzaffarabad, Domel road across the Kohala Bridge on the Jhelum Valley Road used to remain open during winter to facilitated supplies of essential articles. The tunnel on top of the Pir Panjal was built in 1892...

In 1892, Maharaja Pratap Singh asked for a British engineer to help link up the two sides of the Pir Panjal. What he built was not a tunnel in the real sense of the word, but an arch with open spaces in its spans that gave a partial cover and kept the road open during mild snowfall. Although this was called the Banihall Tunnel, it was not a regular tunnel. It was only in 1953, that the Government of India called in a German-Swiss company M/s.Karl Kunz, to survey the mountain and build the tunnel.

The original arch was built at a height of over 9,000 ft. and the German engineers bored a tunnel at a height of 7,000 ft., which eventually saved about 30 miles in travel over perilous hairpin bends. This tunnel was after completion inaugurated in 1956 with a two-way road for incoming and outgoing traffic.

Life in the early part of the century was a curious mixture of the desire to remain secure, and contented within limited means. As can be seen from census records, Pandits

numbered roughly about 50,000 in the entire valley in 1901, this went up to over 54,000 in 1921, a span of one generation. The curious thing about the 1921 census was that more Pandits were living in the rural areas than in Srinagar. This trend changed within a space of 30 years with more and more people, especially the young ones who had gone to school and college, migrating to Srinagar in search of employment.

There was very little contact with the outside world. When Dr. Gasha Lal and Dr. S.N. Peshin, went to England for higher studies in medicine it created a stir within the community. But when R.C. Kak, who later became the second Kashmiri Pandit (he was from the Valley) to become the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir in the 20th century, and L.N. Zutshi married Englishwomen, the community was scandalized, but since both of them were affluent nothing much came out of it. The reason is very simple. The Pandit is always conscious of rank and both of these gentlemen had the rank.

In 1877, and right through to the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century till 1947, the turban was the normal headgear for every Kashmiri Pandit. There are some old faded photographs of the earliest batches of students who passed out of the Mission School at Fateh Kadal showing all Pandit students wearing turbans.

The dress for the male was a shirt and a pyjama with a sweater and a coat during cold weather but the majority preferred, unless they had to go to office, wearing a pheran and, if it was below zero temperature, a thick woolen blanket over it. Wearing leather was originally taboo but as time went on they were allowed, outside the house, shoes, long boots, belts, halters and whips during the glorious horse era. Of course, on reaching home, everybody had to take the shoes off at the entrance or in the passage near the door on the ground floor.

The footwear was the interesting part of the dress. Those living in the villages used a modified kind of Paizar, a native shoe with a long nose, and in summer quite a few used to wear khadaon (wooden logs) Patan Gapal. In town, that is Srinagar, most of the old fashioned types used an open shoe without shoelaces, which was strangely enough called “Panditji Boot”. Fashion, they say, goes round in circles. The same Panditji Boot has now become so popular in India that most executives prefer it. Today it is called “Slipons”.

This was in the thirties and forties but in the two decades before that which ended in 1920 it was slightly different. At home, going to the bazaar and moving around in your Mohalla, it was the “Khrave” – the wooden sandal with a small strap but one has to remember that this was a symbol of progress. What it replaced was indeed a device that had lasted the people in the Kashmir Valley for 5000 years.

What I am talking about?

It was the unique “*Pulhoru*” It was made of grass. It had pleats and it had a sole, which provided the foot firm grip when walking especially on frozen chunks of ice. Most Pandits living in villages used it as did most in Srinagar. But the march of time changed it gradually from Pulhoru to Khrove to Leather chappal and Leather boot.

What was the daily routine like in those days? The majority of those living in Srinagar were clerks and petty officials in the State Government, the Srinagar Municipality, and

after 1911 the Shali Store, the Accountant General's office. In the rural areas, those who had some land, supervised farming operations in summer and just passed the days in winter when the fields were covered with snow.

But even here the children were sent to school and very often one would find a Pandit farmer who would also be a Village Primary School Teacher and his children would aspire for a job in the city. That explains the seeming paradox of the 1921 census, which revealed more Pandits in Villages than in Srinagar City.

The street scene would reflect the daily routine of most city Pandits. From early morning on working days the traffic by foot would start by about 9.00A.M., with clean-shaven Pandits wearing European clothes but wearing a turban walking briskly towards the Secretariat. The procession of these employees would draw them from Chattabal, Ali Kadal and Rainawari as also other areas such as Habba Kadal etc.

Two points remain to be explained: Right up to 1947, the headgear was an important part of a man's dress and the majority wore turbans. A few of the younger lot in the forties went in for caps. My father and my uncle both sported turbans right up to 1947. My father gave up the turban, but my uncle was more tradition bound and continued to wear the turban till the day he died.

During the 1830s, G.T.Vigne, an employee of the East India Company, came to Kashmir and his description is apt: "Independently of the forehead-mark, there is a difference in the style of the turban. The Hindu smooths it over the right temple, the Musalman on the left. There is also a distinction in wearing the tunic: the Musalmans tie it on the right side, whilst that of the Hindu's is folded over to the left breast."

The second point relates to transport. In most princely states, in the capital city, there was no organized Municipal Bus Service. Strangely enough the city of Bangalore was similarly placed because most of the employees lived within walkable distance from the Secretariat at Bangalore, which was then called Attara Kacheri. They would eat their lunch in the morning and walk to the Secretariat. There was no city bus either in Bangalore or in Srinagar.

In the Kashmir Valley, because of lack of railways, the bus services were the first to reach Srinagar and other smaller towns, but the ordinary man had still to walk and the slightly affluent ones could hire a tonga. There were no rickshaws, only horse drawn vehicles. When finally the Municipal Bus Service was inaugurated in the seventies, the initial minimum for a ticket was one Anna. The housewives looking at the novelty of the bus going through the narrow lanes of the city promptly nicknamed the bus "Ponde Bus". The word Ponde means one Anna. In effect, it was the one-Anna bus. Subsequently autos and taxis appeared although the latter was there earlier but mainly meant for tourists.

One of the greatest ambitions of the Pandit was to secure a Government job and in the small marriage market a boy who had a Government job no matter how low became an eligible to bachelor to be sought out by anxious parents with daughters of marriageable age. There is a wrong impression that Pandits held a monopoly over jobs. True a large

number of them were physically present in these jobs but most of them were at the clerical level. There was hardly any technicians' leave alone any engineers or officers.

The majority of them would start as clerks and after about twenty years be promoted to head clerk, which was a great occasion for rejoicing, and finally retire in that post. A few lucky ones would retire as Office Superintendent. Today this post is called Section Officer.

The initial grade was 25 – 2 – 55. This was where the majority of Pandits began their careers in Government Service. The next grade was 40 –4 – 80 and this was for the favoured few. The few Pandits who took up unusual professions like Police (Uniformed) and technicians at the Overseer (today this post is called Junior Engineer) level, the higher grade of 80-8-200 was applicable.

A Handful Of Rice (Mochchaphol)

A drop of water is all alone, weak and ineffective. When other drops join it, it becomes stronger and when many more join it becomes an ocean. So is it with public social causes, which Kashyap Bandhu espoused. When he had no money for social work or for his paper Martand, he asked the people to contribute a handful of rice.

“Kashyap Bandhu can claim credit for starting the custom and practice of Mochchaphol but in reality the programme was Shyamlal Gurtu's brain child. The meaning of Mochchaphol is fistful of rice in the Kashmiri context. Shyamlal was very eager to raise a fund for the welfare of poor families of the Biradari. He agreed with the saying that charity begins at home. At the same time, he was conscious that it should also begin from that home from which it is proclaimed. But he didn't have enough money to open the fund.

“He was not employed in any government or private institution that could have been a source of his income. He was dependent on the income from his agricultural land, which was in the form of farm produce rather than cash. It may be for this very reason that Shyamlal Gurtu, instead of collecting money from the affluent class of the Biradari for its needy members, launched a mass campaign for collection of handful of rice from very household every month and himself contributed one or two treks (approx.5kgs.) of rice every time. He was very generous in sharing the yield of paddy from his field with others every autumn. In the times of scarcity of food grains in the valley, which was a common phenomenon those days, he used to help his needy neighbours and relatives with bags of rice free of cost and to not so needy persons on nominal price and that too on credit which they seldom cleared.”

Harikrishna Kaul, Koshur Samachar, September 2001.

The next grade was, 80 – 8 – 200. This was the grade that paved the way to the Gazetted Officers' rank. My own father was in a grade, which till today I have not been able to fathom. The next in line was 150-10-250, which was a dream few could attain though many might aspire for it.

My father's grade in force with the Kashmir Government was 200 – 20- 300 and it was in operation till the late seventies. Simple arithmetic will tell you that within five years an officer will go from the minimum to the maximum of the Grade and then what happens to him. In Government Service, they happily vegetate and stagnate.

Life was hard, Life was simple, but it had its rewards. The entire cycle of twelve months was divided into two parts summer and winter. The high point of it was the magic words "Durbar Move." This was an innovation created by political compulsions of the ruling Dogra dynasty. While summer and winter are a part of the seasons, the exact six-month division came after the Kashmir Valley was added to the Dogra state of Jammu and formed the composite state of Jammu and Kashmir in 1846.

It was Maharaja Pratap Singh who introduced the Durbar move. Srinagar became the summer capital and Jammu the winter capital of the state. On November 5th, of every year the office would move to Jammu and May 5th the Office would reopen in Srinagar. Since most of the Pandits were clerks in the State Government, their life was accordingly regulated. Quite often in every family one or two brothers would be in those departments which would move to Jammu and a third brother would be employed in Srinagar itself. This would ensure that the family home was occupied and protected.

While those who went to Jammu enjoyed milder weather during winter, those who were left behind had to face the combined rigours of **Chille Kalan, Chille Khorad and Chille Bache for ninety days**. These were the divisions made to measure the intensity of cold in winter. The first one, **Kalan, was the most severe part of winter, which lasted forty days followed by Khorad, which lasted thirty days and Bache, which lasted twenty days**.

Winter was a time of misery. Actually, one had to make preparations for winter in the Kashmir Valley just as one makes preparations for a North Pole or an Everest expedition. As soon as October came, the family head would start buying firewood.

This used to be one of the little excitements for children when the huge blocks of wood were brought and dumped into the yard or aangan. The children would watch as the lumberjacks chopped the logs with their massive axes. After that, the women of the house had to carry the bits and pieces of Zuin (firewood) inside the house. This was a priority job and once finished, the man could heave a sigh of relief. In some houses, an underground room called "Gaan" was used to store firewood.

On the food front, many more preparations had to be made. Those kinds of edibles had to be purchased and stored which would survive the severe winter. Apart from rice, the only other item that was readily available for storage was Rajma and, damma and things like dried fish (hogadde). Aside from this, potatoes and shalgam (vegetables) were purchased in large quantities and put in for long-term preservation.

The preservation of some of the foodstuffs was done in the most innovative manner. At the back of every house, there used to be a small piece of land covered by a projection or ledge, which generally was a small addition to the main room on the first floor. This was called a "Dub". Here a small trench was dug. Into this trench, bags of potatoes and

Shalgam were kept with a wooden plank for cover. As and when required the housewife would go out and get her daily requirement from the trench which is called Khave in Kashmiri.

It needs to be mentioned that before 1947 nobody in the Kashmir Valley would ever touch a chapatti. We were hundred percent rice eaters. It was only in 1947 when supplies were stopped by Pakistan that people gradually started eating wheat because of shortage of rice.

One more thing, in the rest of India, when we talk of “Dal Roti” it means that dal is a staple part of food and takes the place of sabzi (vegetable) in poorer households. In the valley Dhal, was practically unknown and on rare occasions the doctor would prescribe it for a patient who was recovering from an illness. What is Dhal Roti in the rest of India, is “Haak Batha,” in Kashmir. Haak is sag, a green vegetable which is leafy, very rich in iron and used to be cheap and available. This and rice was the staple diet of all the people in the valley as meat and fish though available were expensive. For most people, because the poor are always more in number, **it was always a struggle between the menu and the money – literally between haak and Rogan Josh.**

VANGUJ (TENANT)

Till 1947, there was hardly any person in Kashmir valley who would rent out his home or part of his home to a tenant. Only in rare cases, especially in the Civil line areas, would outsiders be able to get accommodation on rent.

It is a measure of the distinction of Kashmir Valley that there was hardly anybody who did not possess his own shelter over his head. Everybody had a home and the idea of renting out a part of his home for money was totally repugnant and socially unacceptable. This writer had for the first time come across this word, Vanguj when the Pakistani invasion of Kashmir took place in 1947. At that time, a number of Pandit families from the rural areas like Baramulla, Bandipur or Kupwara fled to Srinagar for security.

Gone are the days when a tenant as a rare case would stick out like a sore thumb as neighbours would ask each other as to who he was. The Answer would come “yumin ha chu vanguard” (These people have a tenant).

Today there is a sea change. Renting houses is a source of income.

Give and take

Whenever the marriage of a son or a daughter was to be performed in a family, all the kith and kin would attend the function and offer small sums of money to the head of the family. This was called gulimyuth. Although this paltry amount did not pinch the purse of

the person who paid it, put together, this would amount to a substantial sum that gave financial succour to the yajmaan (head OF THE FAMILY) when he needed it most.

The other useful custom was the payment of wurehbal, which was yet, another contribution made by the relatives and friends towards the expenditure incurred in the running of the kitchen temporarily set up for cooking for various functions connected with the marriage. For cooking for hundreds of relatives, friends and neighbours, a chulah consisting of two parallel rows of bricks bound with clay was temporarily erected and firewood was burnt in it. Called wureh in Kashmiri, the small contribution towards expenses was thus named wurehbal. Gulimyuth and wurehbal gave much financial relief to the family who had to marry their wards. However, the amount of such contributions was limited. For instance, wurehbal was fixed at Re1 for both the rich and the poor, who were called **safed posh** as they wore white clothes. Gulimyuth could vary between a relative and a friend or an acquaintance.

As every family had to perform a marriage or two in his life -time, it was a matter of give and take for everyone. Each got this financial help when his turn came and none felt humiliated while accepting this amount. On the other hand, such customs were ingenious devices invented to firmly cement the bonds of kinship and close-knit Biradari. There is a saying that a friend in need is a friend indeed. To this, I would like to add that friends and relatives those days were real friends and relatives. That is why there is a saying in Kashmiri: **Zardar marih magar kachdar marih neh. Zardar means a rich man and Kachda means one who has many kith and kin. The saying literally means that a person having abundant money can die but one having kith and kin will not.**

Partners In Adversity

It was not only on happy occasions like marriage and yagnopavit (thread) ceremonies that the relatives and friends shared the burdens, but they were partners in adverse moments as well. When a family lost one of its members, their relatives and friends participated in the mourning not only physically but also mentally and financially. On the tenth day, kriya was performed in the nearest river as is the practice even now. All the relatives, friends and neighbours used to attend the function at the ghat. When the kriya was over, the person who performed it would walk from the river ghat towards his home and all the people assembled there followed him up to the gate. Here, they divided themselves in two parallel rows creating a narrow passage in between. The bereaved person would enter his house and come out wearing a pheran with his blanket and wearing a wooden sandal (Khrave) on his feet. He would then walk from one end of the passage, formed by the two human walls, to the other when moving in one direction, the pocket of his pheran faced towards one row of his relatives and friends and while coming back it faced towards the other row. Each person in the two rows would put his closed fist in his pocket and drop some money in the pocket when the person passed by. Although like gulimyuth and wurehbal, the amounts were small on this occasion also, yet, because of a large network of kith and kin, especially due to joint families, such small sums of money were like little drops of water making a veritable ocean. This money helped the family in the smooth performance of the kriya on the 11th and 12th days, which used to be quite elaborate.

Sense of brotherhood

During those days, the members of our community did not possess sufficient sources of income and a majority of them needed financial assistance to perform various social and religious rituals. As such, these contributions came in handy to save the biradari from the clutches of moneylenders. Moreover, this inculcated a sense of partnership in happiness as well as in gloom, which is missing these days to a great extent. Some of us may have improved our financial position substantially, but have no peace of mind, which our ancestors had, in abundance even with limited sources of income.

N.N.MOZA

(The author, who was a Deputy Director in the Sericulture Department in the State government in Kashmir, now lives in Karnal, Haryana)

The ugly face of persecution

- *No Hindu should ride a horse, nor should a Hindu wear a shoe;*
- *That they should not wear Jama (an article of Mogul dress)*
- *That they should not bear arms;*
- *That they should not visit any garden;*
- *That they should not have Tilak mark on their foreheads;*
- *That their children should not receive any education.*

Muhatta Khan

He was just a usurper who overthrew the Subedar and through rabble rousing, persecuted, murdered, killed and plundered the lives and property of Kashmiri Pandits in the first half of the 18th century when Mughal rule over Kashmir had become shaky.

3

OF THINGS NATIVE

Kangri

Kangri is a Sanskrit word meaning a fireplace first used by Upadeva. To a Kashmiri, nothing is more indigenous and, therefore, typically Kashmiri than Kangri, the fire-pot. It is the result of experience spread over a very long time that made this article of creative genius possible. The kangri is a combination of baked-mud and wicker. Manan was the ancestor of the kangri. The earthen pot around which hatab twigs are woven is called Kundal in Kashmiri and the Kangri makers are known as Kanil. They live mostly on the banks of the Wular Lake in the villages of Watlab and Botingo where women and children help in Kangri making .

In Tsrar village, a special kind of Kangri is manufactured, which is known for its white wicker and colour shine. The stout kangri is known as grees-i-kangri. It is almost double the size of an ordinary kangri. It is kept under the pheran, the outer garment of a Kashmiri. The kangri gives warmth from the burning charcoal inside and the degree of warmth varies. More than 500 families are engaged in Kangri – making. They use pohu, lim, kachu and hatab in the form of twigs round the earthen pot.

The Kangri clings to a Kashmiri as an object of perfection in indigenous art. Mysticism has shadowed the genius of Kashmir in the past and the five ribs of Kangri represent five elements that make the universe. The pot suffering patiently with fire is the goddess Shakti held fast by the masculine wicker frame-Shiva. It is believed that women have contributed to the perfection of this fine piece of art.

G.T.Vigne “iTravels in Kashmir, Ladak, Iskardo”.

Pheran

Thermal underwear, internal heating, electrical gadgets are all part of the modern armoury to combat cold. In Kashmir Valley, European clothing is still used (2003) during office hours, but at home the dressing gown is for show whereas the sweet pheran is for warmth.

What is a pheran? A long loose fitting garment with wide arms and open collar. It can be worn by bending and pulling it over your head. There are two types of pheran, one for the winter which is made of wool with a cotton lining inside (called poch), the second one made to the same specification but made of cotton. From the head it goes down and reaches just below your knees.

Since both men and women wear the pheran, it is necessary to differentiate between the male and the female apparel. While the male pheran is plain, and comes down to the

knee, the female one is longer and decorated around collar with broad sleeves. It is called in Kashmiri Naware.

The happiest combination is the pheran and the Kangri, which under the cover of pheran provides the heat. *Let the Chille Kalan come, my pheran and my kangri will fight it.*

<i>Ai kangri! Ai kangri!</i>	<i>“Oh, kangri! Oh, kangri!</i>
<i>Kurban tu Houris wu Peri!</i>	<i>You are the gift of Houris and Fairies</i>
<i>Chun dur bughul mi girimu</i>	<i>When I take you under my arm</i>
<i>Durd az dil mi buree.</i>	<i>You drive fear from my heart”.</i>
<i>Geography of Jammu and Kashmir, by A.N.Raina.</i>	

Tea Tales

The cup that cheers but does not inebriate is the ideal nightcap in the Kashmir Valley when the air has a nip in the evenings. Flavoured with cinnamon, cardamom and almonds (crushed), the Kashmiri chai has a flavour all its own.

The pahari chai, as it is popularly called, is boiled in the samavar, which with its aquiline nose and hourglass figure has today become an item of decoration in the plains. Not so in Kashmir, where the needed charcoal is available. Milk is, however, used by Kashmiris in preparing what is called sheer chai. It attains a pinkish colour, thanks to the use of bicarbonate of soda. Salt is added to taste. In the tele-serial Gul Gulshan Gulfam, a boatwoman was seen serving this tea.

It is the sugared chai, sans milk, also called “Kahwa” which has its confirmed, traditional devotees abroad. Travelling through Turkey, in the early 70s, we found chai restaurants quite popular in the countryside. Thanks to our Urdu base, we spoke Turkish without an accent – a fact appreciated by the Turks, who are as proud of their language as are the French. Chai is served in cups called fincan (‘c’ pronounced as ‘j’), placed in saucers containing sugar cubes and spiced lemon, to be consumed to taste.

Just as the Turks use the word chai, so do Russians. In Moscow, we came across sugared chai served in glasses, neatly balanced in decorated containers. Since they too use the word chai, it was easy to ask for it. A huge samovar was in use in the restaurant, flames leaping from the burning charcoal inside it. I also came to know that Russians use the word kulich for sweet cake as do the Kashmiris, the only difference being that theirs is soft and more sugared. Mentally traversing to the British ‘cuppa’, part and parcel of the British way of life, one ponders over the social etiquette that goes with the tea ceremony. Even the milk pot has to have a cosy!

I am reminded of one Shri Ram, Scout Commissioner of J&K in the late 30s and early 40s, who had been directly appointed by Maharaja Hari Singh. His dominant passion,

rather, mission, was to wean Kashmiris from the chai drinking habit. He lived in a houseboat-cum-hotel, moored near Amira Kadal, then the first bridge of Srinagar. He would demonstrate to us boy scouts, how to make tea by boiling dried pieces of skin of oranges or rind of apples Avuncular. He was affectionate, wearing a small turban and a close-cut moustache. Shri Ram was a popular figure in the Valley also in Jammu and Ladakh – but he never realized that his was a mission foredoomed to failure.

Somnath Dhar, 19.12.92, Indian Express.

HUBBLE BUBBLE

The British rule in India produced in the English language many new words which originated from Indian language words and got absorbed in the English language.

One of these deserves a mention because it also acts as a link with Kashmir. Try this for size. Water pipe. Now we know that the British colonial culture had the cigar and the pipe as part of the living routine. After dinner, cigar or pipe with brandy was a part of the living culture. Tobacco as such has been part of mankind and it was only in the twenties of the 20th century that the cigar got miniaturized to cigarette, and became very popular worldwide. It also came to Kashmir. While the younger ones started smoking cigarettes, the older ones also continued to consume tobacco but in the traditional way.

And that brings us to the hubble bubble. The Colonial Sahib had already seen this device or contraption in countries like Turkey, Egypt and Afghanistan and also in the rest of India. With his stiff upper lip, the sahib called it the water pipe, but the natives who knew a bit of English noted the sounds emanating from the contraption and rightly named it hubble bubble.

Of course, the traditional name for it in North India is Hookah but let us find out what this hookah is and how it operates. A round metal pot is filled with water and it is corked at the top with a pipe leading from it to end with a holder on which is generally perched a small round earthen pot in which tobacco in a slightly wet state is put over which glowing coals are put that starts processing the tobacco. At the bottom of the round pot, another pipe comes out with a nozzle at the end, which a person puts in his mouth and draws as one would draw, smoke from cigarette. This process produces a sound similar to the words hubble bubble. And hence the name. The proper name is Tamaek Jajir. The perch at the top in which tobacco is put is called a chillum which today adorns the Oxford English dictionary.

Even today (2012) there are many faithful adherents to the hookah as there are to the hubble bubble in the Kashmir Valley. In the rest of India too, it is very much there. If you do not believe me, take a good look at Shriman Mahender Singh Tikait, the famous farm leader from U.P sitting on his charpoy and dispensing political wisdom in the company of his Hookha.

Samavar

The samavar of Kashmir is certainly an 18th century importation from Russian lands via Central Asia. But it appears that Kashmiri metal workers made some changes in its size and form. The type of samavar we have today is not to be found in Central Asia. But certainly the cup called pyaleh in Central Asia and in Kashmir is identical in shape and size. In Kashmir, it is called chinpyaleh, thereby indicating its Chinese origin. The fact of the matter is that it must have been brought for the first time from Yarkand or Kashghar, which lie in Eastern Turkestan, with which regions we had a brisk trade in medieval times and which in turn were very close to Chinese mainland. They might have brought it from China, named it Chinpyaleh and passed it on to Kashmir. Pandits have the khos instead of Pyaleh but then Khos is the corrupted form of Persian kaseh pronounced as khaseh.

Vitasta, Dr.K.N.Pandita. (1999-2000)

Note: The word samavar is the way it is spoken in Kashmiri. In Russian and English, it is spelt as samovar.

Dhoonga (House boat)

Noah's ark may have been the first boat in history or legend according to Western sources, but in Indian history and folklore, boats were present in the times of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.

In the Kashmir Valley with its many rivers, lakes and waterways, boats have been around for a long time. Normal ordinary boats to carry people or light loads are called *shikaras*. Shikaras are narrow at both ends and wide in the middle for balancing the weight.

The dhoonga is the bigger version built on the same lines, but with greatly increased capacity for people not only to live, but also to carry passengers and loads. In Kashmir, a small community called Hanjis, who are professionally and traditionally boatmen, also live in dhoongas. Often even today, you can see dhoongas tied up on the Jhelum River or the various canals where people sit, sleep, cook and make it their floating home.

Until the advent of the British, the dhoonga ruled the roost. However, when Tyndale Biscoe arrived, he introduced British designs for rowing boats and bigger cutters. His pioneering work (*sadly not remembered or acknowledged by the Kashmir Government even today*) encouraged the modern houseboat design to come to Kashmir. The basic difference between the dhoonga and the houseboat is that, the latter has more flat space inside to accommodate European furniture like chairs, tables, and beds as also toilet and bathing facilities.

Houseboats are for tourists. Dhoongas are for natives. Though the houseboat has now been around for nearly 80 years, it has not been able to make a dent into the seniority and position of the native boat. *Long live the Dhoonga.*

Grandparent's Attire

"It was my son-in-law ringing up from abroad to give us the good news that they had been blessed with a baby girl and we had graduated to the ranks of grandparents. Definitely an occasion to celebrate and we both agreed to dine out. Few hours still left, the dresses we must wear for the occasion took our time; wife insisting that she must wear a saree, possibly in tune with her newly acquired status—grandmother. I suspect we welcomed being grandparents but refusing to accept that we had crossed the middle age. Finally on the way, I realized I was dressed in jeans with Chinese cut shirt and dear wife in salwar kameez with dupatta loosely hung over her shoulders. A smile appeared on my lips as I remembered Atma Kaul and Bhawani Ded; my grandparents. A twitch and I transcended to my childhood and how I watched them dress up with awe.

"It was hot June, Lala, my grandfather, was resting with white Pheran liner (putsch). This was his dress when at home, during peak summer. In the evenings, he used to put on Pheran of spun or cotton cloth, white or grey over the putsch and if he had to go to meet someone, a white or grey shawl would grace his shoulders. Come summer or winter, his headgear, a must, was a safa (turban)—white, cream, saffron or rose pink. Grandfather used to tie his safa as it is tied even today, however, his father used to tie it differently—mostly white Safa with broad band parallel to his forehead. I remember, as a five year old, I used to run to Malayar to collect his freshly dyed, starched turbans with sparkle of mica from Rangur [dyer].

"It was an operation of sorts in balancing while carrying neatly folded turbans flat, on both arms while climbing to the second floor. Grandfather's office dress was an Achkan with churidar pyjama and pink or cream turban. I suspect this dress was a legacy from Sikh or Dogra rule. I remember he had mentioned that his grandfather, Bhawani Kaul, a noted philosopher and a historian in the service of the Maharaja used to go in a pheran, safa with a dusa or shawl wrapped around his body. Come autumn Atta Kaul, as he was called by his colleagues, would shift to grey Kashmiri pheran with a shawl or dusa. During winter his attire at home would be a pheran and pyjama of puttoo [Tweed] with chaddar [Loi or blanket]. As a child I had my puttoo pheran and pyjama. The pheran had a putsch with longer arms, folded over the pheran and called kumb; essentially clothe cover to protect it from getting dirty. I blatantly refused puttoo pyjama till an inner liner was made available. I finally gave it up and settled for flannel pyjama.

"I believe grooms during grandfather's time did dress differently. I burst out into laughter when he gave me an account of his dress on his wedding day. A Kashmiri pheran with white pyjama, pink safa with garlands of Button flower and Cardamum. The barat moved a short distance from Badiyar to Kharyar [place names less than a km away] in a shikar, a while baratis followed in a dunga [bigger boat]. As far as the footwear is concerned, Gurgabi for office, wooden Kharaun for mandir, big kharaun for snow and for pilgrimage to Hari Parbat, a pulhoru [slippers made from paddy stalk]. Slowly I saw transformation in his dresses; more so on special occasions; coat and pant with a cap instead of a safa. His colleagues even dabbled with karakuli topi or Khadi. In this euphoria, I had crossed the selected place for our dinner till my wife nudged me to stop.

“I watched my wife walk, ahead of me, on high heels putting years behind her. I remembered Bhawani Ded walk majestically in a pheran with a tiny tot in my dress not seen much these days. Kalpush [skull cap] of woolen cloth with red Kashmir or pashmina band with Zari embroidery called tala chuk. A Zooj of muslin cloth with silk border laced with Zari embroidery covered the kalpush. Four inches width white cloth putti called taranga lath with its last portion polished with starch tied around the kalpush and over the zooj. I recall taranga dhobis were a separate lot and mostly next to Fateh Kadal bridge, who used to do this polishing of taranga lath. Over this a long muslin cloth with a hood and two tails called pooche was a must. It was bad manners to move out of house in a zooj only. Ladies used to starch pooche at home and tails were spun till both were of same length. I believe both tails had to be at the same level as pheran and just touching the ankle. A taranga was incomplete without ornate head needles to keep talc sheet (sheesh lath) in place.

“Usually, pheran for summer was of silk or spun cotton with white potsch neither with distinct broad cuffs called nor with another white cloth cover called kumb to keep it clean. A Zari band called Narivar was sewn with the pheran. Absence of narivar indicated widowhood. The pheran collar and sides lit pockets, above ankle, were decorated with one inch wide silk-embroidered putti called doore. A loonge (literally a cummerband) of silk with trusses [dash] tied around the waist – not knotted yet astutely tied for winter dresses, the loonge would be of Kashmir or pashmina. A starched Muslim dupatta with a prominent beak and secured below the chin with a safety pin. Her dress would change with the seasons-supun cloth pheran at home in summer, a kashmira pheran during late autumn or winter or pashmina pheran for special occasions like marriage. The muslin dupatta would be replaced by a woolen or pashmina shawl called Wodpallav. Her footwear was slightly different – a leather chappal she would never touch with her own hands (I did this errand for her many times and she would wash her feet on return), a big wooden khraw to go to mandir or phlhoru for her puja room (even this was ornately decorated).

“Grandmother’s pocket was occasionally plundered by me –she had Candy, Cardamum tied in a hanky, casket filled with Nasvar. In this state of dream, I involuntarily extended my hand to repeat the plunder when my wife caught hold of my hand reminding me that I was gesticulating unnecessarily – like a ghost.

“Ah! Atma Kaul and Bhawani Ded had disappeared and here 50-plus couple walked hand in hand, till I bent to pick up my wife’s dupatta literally sweeping the floor. I couldn’tdue to tight jeans.”

Brig. Rattan Kaul, Koshur Samachar, September 2000.

4

The Way We Were

Orthodoxy versus Modernism

Today, most middle class Indians wear European clothing during working hours and traditional dresses at home. Over a period of time, it was discovered that European clothing was economical and smart; it also made a man feel active. During the 90 years of British rule, most English educated Indians blindly aped the Englishman even to the extent of wearing a dressing gown, when it was sweltering hot.

After Independence, gradually European clothing was adjusted to the needs of weather and climate. It was unthinkable in those days to see a man going to office wearing open sandals but today the entire accent is on practicality and utility. If one looks carefully around, one will see that there is a resurgence of pride in Indian clothing and on appropriate occasions Indians take pride in wearing Kurtha Churidhar and other traditional forms of dress such as the Waistcoat (Jawahar Jacket) made popular during the forties by Jawaharlal Nehru. Added to that is now the close collar coat.

Flexibility and adjustability has been a hallmark of the passage of the Kashmiri Pandit through turbulent times, peaceful times, war, pestilence and religious persecution. During the Mughal rule, the dress code conformed to that of the conquerors. Subsequently, this form continued with the headgear (turban) worn in different ways. While the Purana Kashur who had migrated to the plains during Aurangzeb's rule had already started their march towards English education in the late 19th century, the Tazu Kashur lagged behind by about two generations. English education on a fairly noticeable scale began to make an impact from about 1910.

Thus it was that among most of the office going clerks, assistants and others such as teachers' who wore the pant and the coat, the only acknowledgement to tradition was the continuation of the turban. By and large most Kashmiri Pandits were in the clerical scale and hence could not be called gazetted officers. One of the unwritten codes seems to have been that one wore a necktie if one was a gazetted officer.

Some of the other items of European apparel made their appearance in isolation and those who used them were at first gaped at. But once it caught on, it was imitated. The case of the night suit and the dressing gown is interesting. For a while during weddings, the son in law was presented night suits and some families did start using it. But today it has come in full circle and most people wear kurtha and Pyjama.

What was the impact of such practices on the small Kashmiri Pandit community in the valley? It is best that we hear about the reaction to foreign ideas and practices from Pandit I.K. Wali and M.K. Wali who were perhaps the first in the community to write a brochure entitled **“The Social Survey of the Kashmiri Pandits”**:

“A father asked his son, who had just returned from England, to wash and come to the chauki to have his food and can you imagine what his reply was? ‘No, thank you, father,’ he said, ‘I can as easily sit at the dining table.’ The father was, no doubt, stunned with the reply, but this was not the only reply; another came to him later. ‘Come here, my son, put on your dhoti and go to bed,’ said the fond parent. ‘Excuse me, my father; I have got my night-suit with me,’ was the reply.

“Once, the same father was taking a walk along the bazaar when a clean-shaven Kashmiri youth, whom he knew to be a fast friend of his son, and as one who was distinguished in his educational career by having been thrice plucked in the matriculation Examination, cut him on the way. His accomplishments seemed to bear a marvellous contrast with his outward show of vanity, and this fact made a deep impression on the old man.

“Next, as the old man moved on, he was amusingly surprised to read a sign-board which struck him as making a proud display of a Kashmiri name – nay caste only preceded by its initial letters and that too so cruelly murdered by a distortion of spelling that a person who has a head on his shoulders would wonder who Mr. B.C. Cole was, an Englishman in name or in reality. Further, as he approached the Circular Road, he espied a pair of young girls, possessed of Kashmiri features; pass on bicycles talking to each other in a manner that made it difficult for him to believe his eyes.

“The venerable gentleman reached home at sunset and went in with a significant look. Putting off his shoes, he squatted down on the wooden platform where the other members of his family were sitting and talking to one another. He began to review the spectacle he had witnessed and at once an excited conversation ensued. The housewife, touched with what she heard, began to talk of the good old times and even went so far back as the days of Sri Ram Chandra. She vehemently argued how in ancient times a brother loved brother, how a son respected his father and felt it his pious duty to follow in his footsteps; how young girls, embellished with the ornament of modesty, cultivated a sense of propriety and obedience and how men lived a free simple life, with fewer chances to excite their evil tendencies. ‘Our boys discuss heterodoxy in our very teeth,’ rejoined the husband, ‘and sacrifice noble sentiments to crude innovations.’ They openly denounce their ancestors as ignorant and narrow-minded and boast of an ideal to form the Brotherhood of Man on Earth. They know not the end of life and the ultimate good of man. Alas! Such things cannot but go on and on.

“The holy scriptures has predicted that the Kaliyuga shall be the age of re-action when religion shall be renounced, luxuries shall grow, sins increase and things change. Oh! Where to see the early freshness of the dawn. Alas! Our purest nationality is waning with time and signs of early greatness are fast disappearing. Our best principles of life are now at the mercy of a heterogeneous accumulation of knowledge. New theories, new lines of action, are operating on our raw youth. Alack! We are undone. Is there no servant of God and Mankind who would deliver us from imminent peril?”

The Kashmiri Pandit and his Panditani

“Both the husband and the wife joined in holy matrimony presented the composite culture of thousands of years that Kashyap Rishi set into motion. Beginning with the 19th century when proper records began to be kept one gets a pen picture of how they looked, how they dressed and what kind of image they generated.

There were two distinct symbols of the traditional pandit. For his office work he would wear, as a concession to Western culture a coat and a white pyjama with traditional boots made by the cobblers in the valley. But for ensuring that his identity was recognized he wore his turban at a jaunty angle. Back at home he wore his pheran, the loose gown without the opening in front as in a Western dressing gown and pulhoru, the sandal made of grass and much later wooden clogs (called Khrave).

While the above was the male attire the better half generally wore a loose pheran specially tailored to the women’s needs and size and accompanied by a headgear (tarange) decorated appropriately to cover the head and a loose scarf tied around the waist to give her a smart look and also keep the loose dress under control while she was busy doing her domestic chores.

The march of time and the ravages of events have of course, played havoc with this visual treat of the Kashmiri pandit couple. Gone is the turban, gone is the tarange, replaced by the bare head and the hair style for the man and the pheran replaced by the saree and salwar kameez.”

To the above, this writer can add: Perhaps B.C. Cole was B.C. Koul who tried to anglicise his name. A subsequent instance can be cited. Another Kashmiri Pandit gentleman who returned from England was named Razdan. He lived on the bank of the Maer in Rainawari. He changed his name to Rozidon and named his house “Maer view “. For a while, no one took notice, after a while, people laughed it away and still later people ignored it.

Members of the older generation of our community would remember the name of Pandit Lambudar Nath Zutshi, the famous mining engineer who also went to England married an Englishwoman, but never forgot his roots. My father has told me of how he would come on vacation to Kashmir and on the following day after his arrival, he would come down to the river side and greet all the Hanjjs wearing a pheran and speaking chaste Kashmiri.

One has to refer from sheer necessity to the past and one would like to mention the name of Raja Narendar Nath Kaul, who was in the twenties the Revenue Minister of Jammu and Kashmir State. He belonged to the family of the Kauls of Lahore of whom one has heard a lot. There were two brothers Raja Sir Daya Kishen Kaul and Raja Hari Kishen Kaul. The latter, as most of us know, was the Prime Minister of Kashmir who put down the 1931 riots.

The story of the Raja Narendar Nath Kaul needs to be told. He was a brilliant student and had already prepared himself for the ICS for which he had to go to England. Apparently the family priests wanted him to go through some rituals. He refused. He went to England did brilliantly in the examination but failed in the horse riding Test which was compulsory. He failed because he was suffering from piles. Since he didn't qualify, he returned to India and soon after was appointed first as Governor (Deputy Commissioner) by Maharaja Hari Singh. He later became Revenue Minister.

In the following year, he chose to stay in Srinagar during winter.

Those days the valley was totally cut off from the rest of the country due to snowfall. He fell ill and had an attack of piles. Bleeding started and would not stop. The Doctors tried everything but failed and the brilliant Minister Raja Narendar Nath Kaul died.

The orthodox among the Pandits ascribed his death to his lack of faith in rituals, as he did not do any after his return from England.

Orthodoxy Inc Defied

Orthodoxy has been the bane of the Pandit community from times immemorial. Our rigidity made Renchin, a Ladhaki prince who later ruled Kashmir, convert to Islam when he wanted to become a Hindu. There were similar countless taboos. One of them was that the Pandit should not travel across the sea. What is puzzling is how this prohibition came about since many Kashmiri Pandits, Buddhist Missionaries travelled to far off places like Sri Lanka, Indonesia, China, Taiwan by sea and land.

This taboo was still in force in the 19th century when Pandit Mohan Lal Zutshi embarked on his adventures through many countries and became a famous explorer and helper to many British military and civil officers. He was honoured and rewarded by the British and admired by everybody in India except his own Kashmiri Pandit community. They harassed him, ex-communicated him, ostracised him. Nobody would eat with him, nobody would invite him to his house or go to his house. In short, he was told in no uncertain terms that he was not wanted. In total frustration he converted to Islam.

In 1884, in the Kashmiri Mohalla of Lucknow, a young man named Bishan Narain Dar who lived there, broke caste restrictions against sea voyages, the news of his clandestine departure to England spread like wild fire within families living in the Mohalla, and aroused a storm of indignation, particularly among the women folk. Within a short time, a meeting of the biradari had been summoned in the shadi khana of the Kashmiri Mohalla, and an order of excommunication passed against him and his chief supporter, Pran Nath Bazaz, then a teacher in the Canning College of Lucknow .

Transition From Turban

A turban was always regarded as symbol of identity and prestige and respect. All references in our epics mention the headgear worn by Gods, Goddesses and warriors and common people. It was a part of man's standing as a male. In fact there were different kinds of turban, which identified the caste, ethnic group, profession and was a kind of ID card of an earlier era.

You may have heard of the story that emanated from the Afghan rule in Kashmir. At that time, they had passed an order that no Kashmiri Hindu could ride a horse and even those walking on the road had to keep their heads down. There was this very poor Pandit who had only one turban, which was in tatters. His resourceful wife got some colourful rags, which she stitched, together into a turban. By skillfully tying the turban he was able to hide the stitches and from the outside, it appeared to be a colourful turban.

Next day the Pandit was walking on the road to go to work when an Afghan riding a horse overtook him, liked the turban and promptly snatched the turban. But what he got in his hand was pieces of rags. He cursed and went away.

What the story highlights is that Pandits were poor as a community but they did not lack in ingenuity, innovation, and patience. That is how they survived.

Reverting to turbans, in the early part of the 20th century, even young boys studying in class 3 or 4 were required to wear turbans. There is an old photograph showing a group of students in the Mission School in the 1890s. In which all Biscoe's students of practically all the classes wore turbans.

When a person took up a job, he had to wear a turban. Even policemen wore khaki turbans. Thus it was that my father and my uncle wore turbans. While my father was modern in his tastes, my uncle was always traditional, orthodox with a minimum of modern accompaniments. Till the day he passed away, he wore his traditional turban. But my father deserted the tradition in 1948 during his first posting outside the state and remained turban less till they day he died.

The above is a glimpse of headgear but for the rest most of the Pandits switched to European clothing and it was till very recently that the unspoken convention of wearing a necktie was confined only to gazetted officers. Even now, one can find in Kashmir non-gazetted officers not wearing a tie and moving around in just a coat and a pant.

Faith and Belief

The Father was worried. The son was going on a long journey. He briefed him, advised him, and gave suggestions for safety. He helped him to pack and finally asked him.

“Any questions?”

“Yes, what do I do if my holy thread breaks or gets lost?”

“Well, It’s written in our shastras that in an emergency you can take any piece of string, say a prayer over it and it gets consecrated. After that, you can put it on and it becomes your holy thread. “

“What if I cannot get a piece of string? Then what do I do?”

“It is provided in our shastras that in that case you can dip your fingers into water and draw a line along the same line on which the real thread would hang “.

“What do I do if there is no water? “

*“Then, my son”, sighed the father, “**ONLY GOD CAN HELP YOU**”.*

5

The Way Things Were

Even today, there is no sewage in Srinagar City especially the old city of Seven bridges and areas surrounding it and linking it to Rainawari. Of course, in the past fifty years since Independence new extensions like Bal Garden, Magarmal Bagh and other areas do have sewage but the old areas still live in primitive conditions. Most of them have now pits since the profession of picking up night soil has practically disappeared not only in Kashmir valley but also in the rest of India.

The first experience that Srinagar city had of modern housing was the development of Karan Nagar (named after Yuvaraj Karan Singh). This is located beyond Kani Kadal across the main road and was popularly known as Dewan Bagh. Quite a few progressive well to do Pandits built their houses there. This was perhaps the first middle class locality and it was half way towards the rich and the super rich living near Dal Gate and on Gupkar road.

The strange thing, looking at it at this distance of time, is that even houses did not have Municipal numbers. They were identified largely by the owners' names. When electric meters were installed after the arrival of electricity, the billing was only by the name of the owner and the localities name, either the Mohalla or the Kocha (Lane).

As recently as the eighties I have addressed letters where only the name of the person and the locality and its proximity to the relevant number of the bridge is written. For instance:

Prof. N.L. Darbari,

Narpirastan,

2nd Bridge,

Srinagar,

Kashmir.

As you can see from the above, this is not an accurate address. Mind you, Narpirastan is closer to the Third Bridge than to the Second Bridge. But the reason why the letters reached their destination is because the Postman from the second bridge (Haba Kadal) served our Mohalla.

The location of people and houses was also a beautifully romantic, vague system, which surprisingly enough worked. The following conversation will illustrate it:

“Can you tell me the way to Prof. Wazir’s House?”

“Go straight towards Habba Kadal beyond Chinkral Mohalla. You will find Dr. Sham Bhat’s House. It is just practically opposite. In fact it is on the main road”

So the key identification mark is Sham Bhat. Who was he? The late Pandit Sham Bhat was a respected doctor who was well known to all Pandits in Srinagar and beyond. Thus, the man looking for a particular address in that locality would be told the approximate distance and direction that house was in relation to the good Doctor’s house. The main method of identification was first and foremost with regard to addresses the proximity of the bridge on the river Jhelum. It had to be either between second and third bridge or fourth and sixth bridge.

Earlier, we mentioned Prof. Darbari. Suppose I were to give instructions to someone to go to his house. I would say “From Maalik Aangan walk a little further and you will come on the main road to the shrine of Narishwari where there is a lamp lit and beyond it is a Mazar. Next to it is a Lane. On the other side of it is a”Kandar Waan “(Pandit Baker). Go through the lane until you reach the Kachroo House and then watch out for another Lane going to Razdan Kocha, but keep going. On the left side you will find the Darbari House.

What Is This X-Ray?

Modern Medicine came to Kashmir valley through the good offices of the medical missionaries of the CMS of London. The Neve brothers were both doctors and the mission hospital that they set up can still be seen there today as we go through the 21st century. One of the greatest diagnostic tools of modern medicine was the x-ray and what Srinagar city, the main urban hub of the Kashmir valley, lacked was the newly developed x-ray machine, which had been commercialized in Europe in the early 30s and had come to commercial centers in India. The nearest big centre for the Kashmir valley was Lahore (now in Pakistan)

It was at this juncture that a Kashmiri Pandit doctor decided to set up his x-ray clinic in the valley. Until then, there was no facility for the general public to have an x-ray taken. This was Dr. Shivji Dhar who started a clinic for x-rays and today much more than half a century later, it is still there despite wars, terrorism, militancy and natural calamities.

This was a pioneering effort by a member of the community, which is basically a service-oriented community. Dr. Shivji Dhar’s grandson Dr. Hiralal Dhar, a medical graduate of the Madras University, is today running it very efficiently.

Spring time, Picnic time

It was a period of transition. Electric light had made its appearance but it was not universal. Cars were few; there was no public transport. Most people depended on their legs and for longer distances it was the horse drawn carriage known as the Tonga. Radio was rare and movies had just come but were taboo as going to the movies was considered to be something bad.

Under these circumstances, how did the people amuse themselves? What we call fun today was also there but in a different form. Enjoyment was also dictated by, strange as it may sound now, the seasons. After the hellish winter was over and spring had come, it was time to picnic. The most famous picnic of the season was “Badamwari”. A word of explanation:

Almond trees initially have flowers, which bloom in spring, and groves and groves of it with fresh grass growing on the ground provided the ideal local for a picnic. Most families would pack up their samavars and sweets and other eatables and carry them to these badamwaris where they would sit on the ground and enjoy the scenery.

The children, practically imprisoned during the six months of winter, suddenly discovered the joy of freedom and one could hear shouting, screaming and playing all over the picnic grounds. The adults would sit and quite often meet some others whom they would not have seen during the winter.

It was the beginning of the New Year and a change from the day-to-day drudgery of work both for the men as well as the women.

As the spring advanced into summer and the Mughal gardens adjoining the Dal Lake were opened up for visitors, the locals mixed with the tourists who were also coming to Nishat, Shalimar and Harwan to name just a few.

How did the locals go for such a picnic?

Whereas they walked to badamwari, Nishat was a bit far away. The journey was conducted by riding the native boat called a dhoonga. It has to be borne in mind that when such an outing was planned terrific, excitement prevailed especially among the children. Women would plan the menu and select their best pots and pans including the inseparable samavar. They would board the dhoonga at the nearest point on the Jhelum River and it would either be an overnight trip or, as was the case mostly, a one day trip beginning with the departure early in the morning and arrival late at night.

For the Pandits, there were places where they went on pilgrimage such as Amarnath, Ishibar, Mattan, Verinag and Khirbhavani. While Amarnath was a tough three-week trip, Khirbhavani (Tulla mula) was the most popular. Here too, the journey was made by dhoonga and in most cases it was an overnight trip. Khirbhavani was a perennial

destination as one could go there at any time. However, the festival associated with the shrine is Jyesth Ashtami.

Exodus

By the mid fifties it was quite clear that employment opportunities within the state would keep on shrinking because there would be more Muslim candidates for any Government job. In order to satisfy the aspirations of Kashmiri Muslims, the Government of J & K declared education from Class I to M.A level free, although it was not the post 1947 Government which did it, but the Government of Maharaja Hari Singh which made education practically free. Even today it is the only state in India, which has free education all through.

During the thirties and forties, a few Pandits had ventured into the field of Engineering and Medicine. And after Independence, when a tremendous expansion of developmental activities was planned for the whole country, Kashmir also got its share.

The first crop of youngsters all wanted to become civil engineers but most of them could not get admission into the degree (B.E) course. So they went in for the next best thing, the diploma course which qualified them for an overseer's job. With fresh projects coming in a steady stream, overseers had no problem finding jobs and brides.

This was a period when the Overseer was highly prized as a potential or future son-in-law in the marriage market. The conversation between illiterate women of the older generation and middle-aged women with some education was revealing to the extent that one could gauge a change in the value system in the community.

“What is the boy doing”?

“He has just joined the PWD as an Overseer”

“What is his salary”?

“Salary is only one fifty”, but over that he gets “*Phetwain*”, meaning thereby extra money from other sources or as they say in Hindi “Ghoos “

The sixties and seventies saw a gradual movement of young men who could not get a seat in the newly opened Engineering colleges and the Medical Colleges in the State. Most of them studied outside, qualified and took up a job wherever they could get it. Of course, their parents stayed back and they would visit the valley in summer and spend the leave there.

Gradually, avenues of employment in the state dried up and practically every young boy knew that he would have to leave the state for acquiring a technical or professional

qualification. This went on right during the eighties until there were thrown out by murder and torture in 1989-90.

Gradually the preference for civil engineering died out and many opted for other branches and today (2002) quite a large number have opted for computer related subjects like software and electronics etc.,

Earlier recruits in Jammu & Kashmir Government retired and were replaced by Muslims. Apart from this, more and more exposure to Punjab, Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Pune and Chennai broadened the outlook but also physically scattered the community. Though a number of associations were founded and are working quite well, the exodus from Kashmir has had its effect in further splintering the community.

Building a House – a lifetime achievement

Under any circumstances, building a house in India is most of the time a once in a lifetime activity. What you build in this generation is generally bequeathed to the next generation as an inheritance.

There was this Pandit whose wife was pestering him to build a house. After marshalling his resources, he finally agreed and already owning the land, he felt it would not be such a costly undertaking. In those days, No architect was employed and the plan was simple and straightforward – ground floor kitchen and living room, first floor bedroom and second floor summer living room.

Generally speaking, in Srinagar in every Mohalla one could find a mid wife, a compounder, a carpenter, a mason, a baker, a grocer, a milkman, a vegetable seller etc., Once the decision was made, the local mason was contacted and, to cut a long story short, construction began.

The first payment had to be made before construction and the second payment after the foundation was laid. Every day, after the construction began, the owner used to come directly from the office and watch the final stages of the day's work.

It was a sight to see, the pride in his eyes, the gestures for the neighbours and the pose that would put a Raj Kapoor to shame. And in filmi style, he would take out his packet of Gold Flake and light up a cigarette, blowing rings of smoke into the air.

Very soon, the walls for the first floor began to be built and more money was needed for which he tried to take a Provident Fund loan. Naturally, paper work, especially in a Government Office, takes time and even if it is meant for a Government Employee it still takes time. Hence, our hero was worried. The mason, the carpenter, the labourers, the cement, the woodwork had all to be paid for and they had not yet reached the first floor.

The money came, the pressing bills were paid, but money seemed to be in short supply and he had to come down from Gold Flake to Cavendar. Anyway the wife was happy the house was coming up and she was looked upon with envy by the rest of the ladies in the locality.

But the master of the house was worried, terribly worried. He began to wear a pinched look on his face. It seemed to him the second phase of the construction was going painfully slow and his money was running out faster than the house was coming up. Eventually, the first floor was also completed and by the time they reached the second floor our hero's money ran out but he was one of those who never say die.

(The expression is, "he never says die" that is, he never gives up)

The head mason was laying the bricks for the wall and his assistant was helping him. He took a break to have a smoke and was talking softly to his assistant.

"Have you noticed that he has changed to Cavendar and I guarantee you that next month he will change to Red Lamp".

"I do not think so", said the younger man and added, "He is not that poor"

"We will see"

And sure enough, in two weeks time, our hero came down to Red Lamp, which was of course, to cheapest brand of cigarette in that Golden Era of the 20th century.

But our Pandit hero finally built the house and lived happily ever after in it, that is, until Pakistan's export of terrorism hit the Valley in 1989.

Byon Nerun (Family Partition)

It was only in the twenties and thirties that the population increased and with education, old social taboos began to crack. Family fights resulting from differences between father and son, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law resulted in expected acrimony and in a few cases the partitions of the family took place.

As years went by and the economic condition of the community improved, partition became less painful but what we are talking about here is division of an old house and separation of generally the kitchen and the bed rooms.

Very often, the acrimony would begin in two areas after the partition - one is sharing of the water tap and the other that of the toilet. In our neighbourhood also, such a partition took place and where one kitchen would feed a family of ten, two kitchens would feed four on one side and six on the other. Thus, the beginning of the modern age started,

where individual comfort started becoming more and more important and convenience for the younger generations became more important, came. However, the blame for partition has been, I feel, wrongly placed at the door of the young daughter-in-law who is branded as the villain who turns her husband against his parents.

This is however a glance at the past. Happily enough today family partitions are no longer acrimonious.

Batta* Tongawalla

He was a young man full of hope, energy and enthusiasm. But his parents were poor. He passed his High School and started looking for a job. He looked and looked and looked but there was no job.

He was desperate. One day a neighbour in the Mohalla asked him to help bring his horse from the barn and harness it to the tonga, **which** he was driving. After thanking our boy, he asked whether he would like to drive a tonga and earn some money. Our boy was desperate and he said yes.

And so began his journey into the unknown world of Batta (Pandit) Prejudice. Even as he tried the new job, he found he liked it. It was difficult, it was hard work but it had its rewards. At the end of the day, he had money. He was afraid to tell his parents at home about his new job. But one day they found out and told him to stop.

“What will the neighbours say? They have given us a new name. They call us Tongawalla”.

He argued himself hoarse pointing out that if he had another job, he would not certainly drive a tonga. Suddenly, he decided to become obstinate. He refused to give it up. He did the job, earned the money and saved some. By this time, everybody called him a Tongawalla especially those from the KP community. But he did not care. He left the Valley, learned to drive a car and lived happily ever after. This is one story. There is another one (and many more) about our prejudice with regard to professions, which are not socially acceptable.

There were two Young men – Somnath and Janakinath. Both were interested in hairdressing. They were promptly nicknamed Barbers (Navid) but again they were determined, left the valley and went to Bombay where they made good and lived happily ever after.

* Batta, Kashmiri word for Kashmiri Pandits.

Social attitudes have changed but a lot more needs changing.

The Three Rs and Eve

As late as the 1920s, very few girls were sent to school or college. A few used to be sent to primary or to middle school level and then brought home and prepared for their marriage. In our own joint family, the first two girls, one born in the twenties and other in the thirties, were educated only upto the primary level, whereas the third daughter born in the forties was lucky to get a good education.

One of the main reasons for this was first physical safety and second lack of avenues of employment after education. Also the overriding factor was that the qualitative requirement for a bride in the twenties, thirties and forties was ability in house work rather than education. Among the more orthodox a girl who went to school was considered to be a risk so far as character was concerned.

After Independence, as avenues of employment within the valley decreased and mobility gradually took hold, the Pandit boys were educated at the school level and up to the intermediate level in the valley after which most of them went to other parts of India for puruing technical courses. Medicine or Post-graduate studies in universities. Simultaneously, with this, the number of schools and colleges for women increased within the Valley and this gave an opportunity for the Pandit girls to study beyond high school and even in professional courses. This trend started in the fifties and continued up to the seventies by which time practically every Pandit family had a relative outside the Valley, which made it easy for either a boy or a girl to go and persue higher studies outside Kashmir.

By the time the eighties came round, all children whether boys or girls had to have an education even in those families which were located in villages or some towns like Khanabal, Anantnag, Baramulla, Sopore, Kupwara, Verinag, Mattan etc., Today, no one even asks whether the girl is educated or not because everyone takes it for granted that she will be educated at least up to the degree level.

It is for this reason one can safely say that the half a million Kashmiri Pandit community scattered all round India and around the world is a hundred percent literate community.

In most Hindu communities in India, there has always been dowry present in some form or the other Kashmir is no exception. In Kashmir according to their status, dowry would be paid but it was never called dowry since, we had an ancient code of conduct and even a graded slab system of payment of money or giving of presents on various occasions in terms of cash or kind. This has been graphically described by Pandit Anand Kaul in his pioneering work, "The Kashmiri Pandit" published in 1924.

Marconi Comes To Kashmir

Radio had come to Kashmir but was mainly used for military purposes, by the Maharaja and other important people of the state. Its actual sale in a shop began in 1946 after the war.

In the words of Mr.J.L.Ganjoo (Koshur Samachar, August 2001), his father Pandit Niranjana Nath Ganjoo bought a radio set on July 5th, 1946. A limited quantity had come to Kashmir for sale and this was perhaps the first introduction of Kashmiris to radio as a medium of news and entertainment.

“This unique set with a distinct look had keys/switches to control its various functions, which included fine tuning, band spread, voice-controlling device, off and on switches for light, etc. it had also the mechanism to indicate whether or not a radio station existed on particular wavelength. Marketed under the trade name of “Sky Champion”, this set made in Chicago, USA, was actually a product meant to serve the communication needs of World War II.

Besides an inbuilt step-up transformer backed by powerful valve operating system, it had the advantage of sending and receiving signals independently, exactly on the pattern of a wireless transmitting set, through a specially designed instrument, which was, however, detached, consequent to public sale after the victory of the Allied forces in August, 1945. Its quality of reception and other mechanical devices enthralled and captivated the hearts of many a listener. Alas, like every other thing, this too we left at Srinagar in 1990.

My father, had told me that as a result of short supply and cost factor, only 21-22 sets of this magnificent radio were marketed in Srinagar through Messrs. Lyra & Co., Lal Chowk. One Pt.Ved Lal of Habbakadal, who probably worked with the concern, helped us to get the set at Rs.1, 100.

One such set purchased by Dr.S.K.Shangloo, the then state physician who had accompanied Maharaja Hari Singh from Srinagar to Jammu at the time of the Kabaili raid. He did possess this set for long. Among others, the names of Maharaja Hari Singh and the Amar Singh Club also figure in the list of its buyers. To my faded memory, even Srinagar Radio Station and the post office possessed these sets for communication purposes.

Economic changes apart, other political developments, taking shape in the Indian subcontinent, had already created a sense of awareness amongst the general masses. Electronic media was still at an upcoming stage and every individual could not afford the luxury of possessing a radio set. The majority of the people, therefore, largely depended on the print media. Milap, Ranbir, Pratap, Navyug, Martand, Hamdard, Tribune, etc. kept the public generally informed about the political developments. Most of these papers came to Srinagar through mail, which caused at least a day's delay. Still the mail and paper carriers got precedence over other vehicles, on the road. This helped them to reach within the shortest possible time, surely an example of good administration, rarely seen

nowadays.

Here I am reminded of a news item over the radio which in its earlier broadcast referred to the Prime Minister of Jammu & Kashmir as Rai Bahadur Ram Chand Kak, then as Pandit R.C.Kak and ultimately as R.C.Kak—all in a day.

Character

It is difficult to identify a people's characteristics. If we delve down deep into human character, no one would stand the test. An English statesman of the last generation said that he did not know how to frame an indictment against a whole nation. The character of a people must, however, be studied from the historical and psychological standpoints and not merely from the logical one. We should be satisfied if the main essential traits of it are right without throwing out insinuations, which are all the more damning because they cannot be adequately proven.

The Kashmiri Pandit is famous for hospitality. Pay a visit to him and he will treat you to the point of worship. It is not uncommon that he will offer food prepared for himself to a guest who chances to come unexpectedly to his house and will himself remain hungry until fresh food is prepared for him. If a guest comes to his house and he has got no cash at hand with which to buy tea to be served to him, he will secretly go and pawn one of his personal effects and bring the tea. Well, someone has said:

“Zara zara hai mere Kashmir ka mihman-nawaz

Rah men pathar ke tukrun se mila pani mujhe.”

“Everywhere greets me the hospitable host of my Kashmir

I got water from even the pebbles on the way.”

The Pandit is truly of ‘simple breed’ – simple in food and simple in dress. Patience and resignation are writ large in his behavior. Give him a slap on the right cheek and he will turn the left but will never provoke you to a quarrel. So law-abiding he is that he regards a State official as a ‘fiat of destiny.’ He is kind to his family and respectful to ladies and is loathe remaining away from home, often embracing idleness as an alternative. He is free from crime against the person and from burglary and thievery. Being naturally sober-minded, he has no passion. Wine and other drinks he spurns. Contentment dominates his character. ‘So long as rice and millet grow and salt is not dear, his life is much the same and gods may be propitiated.

(These are, of course, characteristics of the older generations. Times have changed and people have moved with times, although the main traits remain the same).

The Panditani is, indeed, a picture of self-denial. She abhors fashion from her very core. She is noted for modesty, punctiliousness and chastity and also for industry and thrift. She is brought up to be a mother, never a wife, having been given the epithet of bacha-pasand (fond of children). She is a picture of self-abnegation. She has not become a wife by self-assertion or by the survival of the fittest. She stands resplendent as the mother worshipful, not a beautiful wife to be wooed. She towers above low humanity because of her moral grandeur and not physical charms. Her high spiritual status is reflected in the mythology; indeed the Pandits nay, all Hindus, think habitually of God as She.

The Pandit is intelligent. Even at a distance in the Durbar he can tell by observing the movements of the Secretary's pen what orders are being dictated by the Maharaja. Aurangzeb once paid a compliment to his intelligence at Agra as is recorded in the Ruqat-I-Alamgiri:

“Kashmiri darin mulk nistand ki ma muqurar kunem” –

(The Kashmiris are not to be found here, that we might appoint them in public offices).

He is shrewd, alive to the comic touch, and has a natural gift of repartee. During the Pathan rule a Pandit was asked by a Sirdar why there were 108 beads in the rosary round his neck. “Because the beads are used to keep count in the recitation of the name of Haw (God)”, was the ready reply, “the two letters of H and Q standing as they are for 108 in reckoning by *abjad*.” Diwan Dila Ram Quili Khan was once sarcastically asked by Timur Shah Durani at Kabul why the tika mark was made by him on his forehead. He replied that it indicated that God was one. Timur Shah enquired why the ears were also marked. He explained that it was to show that they were two witnesses to this fact. Timur Shah, in order to baffle him, further asked why the throat was also besmeared. He replied that it meant that whoever entertained any doubt about it was fit to be beheaded. The King was pleased with the plausibility of the answers to his questions and then Dila Ram Quli Khan bore the bell by adding the following two couplets in Persian:

Bar chahra am nazar kum peshaniam bibin

Dagha ghulamia Shahi-Maulasi bar jebin”

“Gar Musalman Kafir o Kafir Musalman shud chi shud

Ancha bayad shud no shud gar in u gar an shud chi shud.”

“Look at my face and see my forehead

The mark of slavery of the Master King is on my forehead”

“If Musalman became a Kafir or Kafir a Musalman

If he did not become what he ought to (i.e., pious, God fearing, etc)

What matters it if he became this (Kafir) or that (Musalman).”

Low Profile

Because of continuous persecution by Muslim Rulers for almost 500 years, the Pandits who survived the onslaught of forcible conversions made it a policy to maintain a low profile, which over the generations became a part of the Pandit psyche.

This would be reflected in the behaviour of the majority of the Pandits most of whom were clerks. They were very few senior officers who were Pandits and the number of rich men, landlords, and businessman could be counted on one’s fingers.

The watchword was “Don’t come to the notice of the rulers or don’t become prominent or don’t do anything that makes you stand out in a crowd”. This perhaps is responsible for two proverbs, which are typical of the community. One is “He was born under this quilt and he died under the same quilt”.

It is the second, one, which needs elaboration; It is “**Nav Zanehemne Kahn**”. Literally translated it means it “Nobody knew my name”. This would explain the need for anonymity among the Pandits. To stay unseen and be part of the crowd.

As a twelve-year-old schoolboy, in Madras where Prohibition was in force, I did not know what the word “Beer” meant. Somebody in my father’s office asked me to find out whether this commodity would be available from the parents of any of my classmates in the English School that I was studying in. I faithfully carried out the task and the next day somebody came and met my father asking him whether he wanted beer.

After cross questioning the gentleman who was the father of one of my classmates, my father found out that the entire conspiracy had started with one of his own subordinates in the office. So when I came during the lunch hour, he closed the office door and gave me the thrashing of my life.

It is not the thrashing that I remember, but what he said. I had by associating myself with beer defamed him and brought down his prestige. The famous last words that still keep ringing in my ears were and are:

“Nav Zanehemne Kahn” (None knew my name. By implication my bad deed would give him a bad name. Stems from the Pandits psyche to keep a low profile all the time and not come to the notice of other people)

“OUR LONE INDUSTRIALIST”

By the early forties, English had completely seeped into the community as an essential basic ingredient to advancement in life. And the word industrialist meant very little as most of us, especially the adults, who had rarely been outside the State, but familiarity with the English language gave a vague idea that an industrialist was a big business man no matter what his business was.

So it came about that by then the name of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and his link with the Kashmiri Pandits and his leadership of the Congress party came as a surprise initially since he had been an exile whose family had left the Valley as a result of religious persecution.

He came to visit the Valley, and the local Pandits gave him a reception and invited him to visit the interior part of Srinagar. As he was being given a guided tour, one of his hosts proudly pointed to a small building on the road in Bana Mohalla and said, “Sir, that is his factory” And pointing to a smiling stout gentleman he added with great pride, “Sir, and he is our only industrialist”.

Nehru smiled nodded and shook the hand of the industrialist and passed on down the street.

The factory that was shown to him was a rice mill and the industrialist who was introduced to him was Pandit Jia Lal Khod, the nice kindly man, who for no fault of his, was pushed forward by eager do-gooders.

Today we have quite a few top business experts and leaders who started out as executives and made a name for themselves in the world of business. For instance A.N.Haksar, J.N.Sapru, Rajive Kaul, Dr.R.N.Kar, A.N.Dhar, V.K.Dhar, M.L.Zutshi, Mohan Lal Shishoo, Hira Lal Zutshi and many others. But even in this area, Pandits shine more as consultants, business executives and employees.

Sixty minutes that changed destiny.

A LITERARY event at Etawah, (U.P.) was hardly an occasion to be remembered for long, but for 'Khatkhata' Baba whose name is on every body's lips in the town. And thereby hangs a tale.

Many years ago one Mr. Sapru came to Etawah as its deputy collector. One evening, he was reclining on his bed and Manohar the barber was massaging his feet. Suddenly Sapru asked Manohar to tell a story. Manohar began rather hesitatingly. "There was a king in Arabia. It was a summer night and the maid had spread a soft-silken bed for the king on the terrace. Perfume had been sprinkled all round with beautiful flowers and cushy cushions befitting a royal fantasy. So enchanting was the setting that th maid was overwhelmed by a mad temptation; how does it feel to lie on this luxurious bed?"*

"The charm was too strong for her and she lay down on the bed. Exhausted after the day's work as she was, the soft breeze and fluffy cushions did the rest and in a couple of minutes she was fast asleep, When the king saw her, he was furious. He sent for the queen and asked her to decide the punishment. She said since the maid lay on the bed for 60 minutes, she would be given 60 lashes. The king shuddered at the severity of the penalty, but there was consolation that the queen would deliver the punishment herself."

"The king started counting the lashes and the maid kept wailing. After the figure of 30 was reached, she started laughing. When the painful ordeal was over, the king asked her for the cause of her laughter. She said: "I first cried because of the pain but then I wondered if an hour's sleep on this bed begets 60 lashes, how many will be awarded to Your Majesty- and the Begum Sahiba too! I laughed at the thought that my judges had no idea of what was in store for them. You are angry at my sleeping at this bed, but what if God similarly chastises you.

These words transformed the king, who was a kind soul. He discarded his crown and robes, donned the apparel of a 'faqir' and left his palace in the dead of night itself"!

"Wow! shouted Sapru, "What a beautiful story. But ...Now I also should relinquish this bed.' And, spreading a blanket on the floor, he lay down. Next day, the report spread like wild fire that Sapru, deputy collector and magistrate first class, had resigned his job of Rs 550, become a sadhu and was sitting on an old blanket under a tree near his bungalow.

The English Collector along with the SP and three other deputy collectors tried to dissuade Sapru from his resolve, telling him he had been selected for promotion, and pleading with him to heed the tears of his beautiful young wife and little child. "Bring up the boy and then become a faquir," they urged him. But Sapru would not budge; "I have to suffer for all the luxury enjoyed at the cost of poor, suffering public."

The Yamuna flows a mile to the south of Etawah. On a 'pucca ghat' there Sapru could be seen sitting on a blanket with a thick wooden club with which he kept knocking at the ground and calling 'Khatke Ka Khatka – Khatpat Karta Reh' so much so that he got the name Khatkhata Baba. Every morning at 10, it was his practice to go with a satchel to town for alms, to sink the loaves of bread received in the river and then to hang the satchel from a branch of the tree till afternoon. Then he would eat some of it and feed the rest to the monkeys above. Such was the life of penance he lived for 12 years – loved and respected by every local family, such that he was eagerly awaited for alms.

Kings and collectors have been replaced by characters known differently – and aplenty, too. But how many Saprus* do we have – whose lives take such a dramatic turn by the mere knock of a tale. The Khatkhata Baba's knock has obviously gone silent. Tales there are, but listeners rare.

*It now transpires that it was not Sapru who gave up civil service to become a sadhu but another Kashmiri Pandit named Choudhury. There is an ashram even today(2002) in the name of Khatkhata Baba in Etawah.

Dr. Bhai Mahavir

May 27, 2000, I.Express

“Your Balance from Purujanama”

Swamiji sat very serene and calm. His eyes generated a radiant cosmic energy that brought about an aura of tranquility that pervaded the entire hall filled with devotees. The Swamiji was talking to an elderly lady who had an incurable disease.

One of Swamiji's devoted disciples was constantly in attendance helping out in every possible way. In fact, there was hardly a day in his life when he did not come to the ashram and have a darshan of the Swamiji.

Batta Saheb was the name of the devotee. He was a clerk in one of the government departments and struggling to make ends meet. On this particular day, a very rich businessman from Amritsar arrived with his family to have a darshan of Swamiji. He brought along with him a huge basket of fruits for the Swamiji. Being Swamiji's helper, Batta Sahib received the basket and put it aside.

The businessman from Amritsar explained to Swamiji some of his personal problems and difficulties. Swamiji listened and calmly told him in a clear voice, “You are passing through a bad time and a trying time. You will soon overcome all your difficulties and God will smile on you”. The devotee folded his hands and took his leave.

Days passed, weeks passed, months passed. Batta Saheb continued to come daily and watch a stream of people coming and going and getting their personal problems perhaps solved. Three months later on a Sunday as he was sitting in his usual place, he saw suddenly the same businessman from Amritsar coming through the door. He looked in better health, his face was bright and both he and his wife were smiling.

They greeted the Swamiji with folded hands, who bestowed a benign smile on them. On the Swamiji enquiring about their welfare both the husband and the wife explained that as the Swamiji had predicted everything turned out right. All their problems had been solved.

After a while they left. Batta Saheb was watching from the sidelines. After all the devotees had left, he was left alone with the Swamiji. And the following dialogue ensued:

“Swamiji, you helped them so much and they have become crorepatis”

“Yes”.

“But I can’t understand why you are doing it for them, but in my case nothing is happening. I have not even been prompted head clerk”.

“Yes, they have become rich but when they came into this world, they brought a plus balance with them in their karma account. The extent of prosperity depends on the extent of punja done during the previous life. “

“And “the Swamiji continued, “In your case, you have got what you inherited from your Karma account. That nobody can change”

Batta Saheb had to be content with that pronouncement.

Utna Milega, Jitna Bhagya Me Likha Hai

(You will get as much as is written in your fate.)

The greatest Social Reformer produced by the Kashmiri Pandit community, Pandit Kashyap Bandhu, persuaded gently the womenfolk to give up the old, cumbersome, dress called Pheran. Although it was pretty to look at, it restricted movement. He resorted to folk poetry and following is the poem in Kashmiri with English translation that gave a clarion call to Pandits to modernize or be left behind:

<i>Travee Pheran lo lo</i>	<i>Give up Pheran, O dear</i>
<i>Zooj, Pooch tye nariwar</i>	<i>Zooj, Pooch and nariwa</i>
<i>Yim chhi Shikasik Sardar</i>	<i>These are agents of degradation</i>
<i>Mala barhaiy gardun</i>	<i>These have filled your neck with dirt</i>
<i>Travee Pheran lo lo</i>	<i>Give up Pheran, O dear</i>
<i>Pooch Pathkun Pakan</i>	<i>Pooch drags you backwards</i>
<i>Walna Yiwan Zangan,</i>	<i>It envelops your legs</i>
<i>Chanda Sadkan doova</i>	<i>The hanging pocket (attached to your Pheran) is cleaning roads</i>
<i>Travee Pheran lo lo</i>	<i>Give up Pheran, O dear</i>
<i>Tarang Chhuee akh Khara</i>	<i>Your headwear tarang is as heavy as a ton</i>
<i>Kalas Peth bodh barah</i>	<i>It is a heavy load on your head</i>
<i>Vank Panuk Soodh Kyah?</i>	<i>What is the use of long hair tail hanging through your back?</i>
<i>Zethem Ziuth lotach,</i>	
<i>Asan Janvaran</i>	<i>Which is attached to animals.</i>
<i>Travi Pheran lo lo</i>	<i>Give up Pheran, O dear</i>

6

Lifelines

The first proper metalled road connecting Kashmir with Punjab in British India was the Jhelum Valley Road. By the time the automobile arrived on the scene, and trucks were used for commerce and passenger buses for transporting people, the Jhelum Valley Road as it came to be known, became the lifeline Of the state. The B.C.Road was actually built for link up with the traditional earlier kingdom of the Dogra rulers and later when the Durbar began its six monthly annual trips to Jammu.

The Jhelum Valley Road

The Jhelum Valley Road is regarded as an engineering feat. This road follows the river Jhelum from Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir, to Baramulla where the river narrows down into a mountain gorge before it leaves the Valley of Kashmir. It is not navigable beyond this point. The road rises on to the winding spurs of the mountains through the Uri gorge, now a vital point of strategic importance on the Line of Control. This road leads through Garhi till it reaches Domel near Muzaffarbad where the clear blue waters of the river Krishenganga join the river Jhelum.

At Domel, the road takes a bend to the west till its reaches Kohala where the bridge on the river marks the boundary of the state with Pakistan. The Jhelum Valley Road was maintained in a good condition and 211 kms distance from Srinagar to Kohala was the responsibility of the Kashmir Government. Annually on an average 8,000 motorcars and 3,000 motor lorries passed over this road from Srinagar to Rawalpindi across the Jhelum-Krishenganga at Kohala and over the Murreehills.

After the invasion by Pakistan in 1947, this important road suffered and it became a military road beyond Uri. This road to Uri is an internal highway for the development of the Kashmir Valley and also the main means of communication and transport for the defence of India on this side of the border. This artery of travel and trade in the Valley of Kashmir with an efficient network of auxiliary roads to the east, west and south is of immense geographical importance.

Rawalpindi to Srinagar

Tret

Sunnybank (6000 feet)(for Murree,

2 miles distant)

Kohala (2000 feet)

Dulai (2180 feet)

Domel (2320 feet)

Garhi (2750 feet)

Chakoti (3780 feet)

Rampur (4825 feet)

Baramula (5150 feet)

Patan (5200 feet)

Srinagar (5250 feet)

The road is usually open all the year round except in January, February and part of March, when it is liable to be blocked by snow over the Murree hills and between Rampur and Baramula. In such emergencies the alternative route by Abbotabad may be used, and the traveller must make up his mind to walk the few miles of bad road near Rampur.

All this was before 1947. Now it ends just before Kohala and is no longer a lifeline for the Valley.

The Banihal Cart Road

The Banihal Cart Road connects Srinagar with Jammu across the Pir Panjal Range through Banihal, Ramsu, Ramban and Batote, Kud and Udampur.

The drainage of the Chenab in its upper course lies in these mountains, where Doda and Bhadrwah are situated to the east. The first tunnel at a height of 2743 m feet above sea level is no more in use now. The Banihal pass commences from Verinag, and its summit is about 3000 feet above Shahbad. The descent on this, the northern side, is, as Mr. Forster, a British traveller, who crossed it in 1783, says, is about a mile and a half shorter than the descent on the southern side. On the summit, is an open space, where a glorious view of the plains of Kashmir bursts suddenly upon those who are entering the Valley by this route. I did not find any particular difficulty in crossing the pass on foot; but on account of the general difficulties of the path from Banihal to Rihursi, there was no instance on record, from the time of the Moghuls downwards, of horses having ever been conducted to the plains of the Punjab by the Banihal pass. But, having taken the advice of Samud Shah and others, I determined to make the attempt, and my Tibetan ponies reached the plains in safety by this route; the larger horses having been previously sent forward either by the Pir Panjal or Baramulla", he added.

“Panjal is a Persian word, signifying a range of mountains. The Kashmirians call it Pansal, which more properly signifies a station where water is provided for passengers; and the pass called Pir Panjal is so named only because the Pir (for so the fakir is called), that is, the old and holy man, the father confessor, resides upon the summit. The Serai of Allahabad is on the left of the path, and about four or five miles from the tower. Opposite to it is a gully, through which the stream descends from Nandan Sir; and at the same spot the pathway of the same name joins the high Shupeyon road.

“Pir Panjal, or highway of the Mogul Emperors from Bhimbur; part of it is also, I believe, called Sona Gulu (the golden defile) in Kashmir. This is shut for about three months and a half; open for foot about the 20th of April, and if the weather be fine, for horses by about the 20th of May. There is also a way called Duru Hal, on the westward of this road”.

“Banihal, always open. I was the first person whose horses had ever been over this pass, which they crossed in safety.”

G.T.Vigne from “Travels In Kashmir, Ladak, Iskardo” 1880.

The boring of the Jawahar Tunnel at 2200 m height and Pir Panjal has discarded the snow-bound loops of the Banihal Cart Road above the 2200 m contour. It keeps the road open mostly throughout winter. The Banihal Cart Road with all other connected roads was maintained in a fair state of repair till the year 1947. In the summer months, the Banihal Pass at 2830 m above sea level was kept open till November when snowfall would block the way for about five months. A light traffic consisting of 867 motorcars, 11,452 motor lorries and 30,000 other conveyances used the road from Srinagar to Jammu and vice versa till 1947.

Jammu To Srinagar – 182 Miles

0.0	0.0	Jammu, Height 1,000 ft.
8 ¼	8 ¼	Nagrota, Height 1,165 ft.
15 ¾	7 ½	Nandni.
20	4 ½	Jhajjar, Height 1,630 ft.

26 ¼	6 ¼	Tikri – Height 2,355 ft
38 ^{5/12}	12	Udhampur, Height 2,248 ft.
48	9 ¾	Samroli.
50 ^{1/1} ½	2 ¾	Dharamthal, Ht. 3,500 ft.
62 ^{1/1}	11 ^{5/8}	Kud, PO: DBK: RH: H: Ht. 4,900 ft,
67 ½ ¾	5.0	Patni Top – Height 6,447 ft. Road falls to Batote (Sansar Patni –12 miles, fair weather road)
74 ^{7/12}	7 ^{1/4}	Batote – Height 5,200 ft.
83 ^{5/8}	9 ¼	Peerah
92 ^{1/21}	9 ¼	Ramban, Height 2,250 ft.
100 ^{1/12}	8.0	Digdole, Height 3,410 ft.
106 ^{1/12}	6.0	Ramsu, Height 3,799 ft.
116 ^{1/12}	10.0	Banihal – Height 5,620 ft. The road rises steadily towards the tunnel.
123	6.0	Nawgam.
128 ½	5 ½	Jawahar Tunnel South Portal Ht. 7250 ft.
130	1 ½	North Portal
131 ½	1 ½	Roakd Junction for Verinag 3 miles
132 ½		Lower Munda
138	6	Qazi Gund. Height 5,673 ft.
150	12	Khanabal to Pahalgam, Achhabal and Anantnag, 28, 7, and 2 miles, respectively.
162	18	Awantipur

173	10	Pampur
182	9	Srinagar Height 5,214 ft. Tourist Reception Centre.

G.R.SARUP, “TRAVEL GUIDE TO KASHMIR”.

The Gilgit Road

Beyond Tragbal at a height of 2743 m above sea-level starts the much talked of Gilgit Road. It is another engineering feat.. Originally, a military road of considerable importance, it covered a distance of 385 km in this strategic region. This highway made history in the early years of the 20th century. The road was completed in 1893 when it was only 3 m wide with a maximum incline of one in ten.

Beyond Gilgit through Hunza, Nagar and Misgarh, man continued to be the beast of burden assisted by the yak to carry heavy loads. In these lofty mountains, movement is difficult when it is very cold. Craggy paths lead to the slopes of the Pamir Plateau through the Kilik Pass. The former Soviet union of Central Asia lies beyond the Pamir and Kizil Rebat, its last air base across the frontier. To the north-west of Gilgit, the mountain paths connect Yasin, Ishkuman, Gupis, Sher Qila and Dib.

The district of Ladakh to the East is surrounded by the lofty Karakoram mountains with the province of Sinkiang to the east of Tibet and the Leh Road from Sonamarg , Baltal across the Zoja La (3505 m above sea level) through Machai, Dras, Kargil to Leh. Leh is the centre of commercial activity where formerly caravans from Sinkiang across the Yarkand River came with their merchandise to be bartered with goods from India. The tourist, the traveller and the trader thus kept this road alive with activity till the year 1947.

7

The Healing Touch

Faith heals the mind and soul, medicine – modern and ancient heals the body. As Gandhiji once said there is no point in talking about cleansing the soul if the stomach of the person is empty and he is dying because of hunger.

It was towards the end of the 19th century that Britain got very seriously interested in Kashmir from the defence and commercial point of view. As the physical features geography and climate of the Kashmir Valley and surroundings resembled that of England, many Englishmen in India were opposed to the Treaty of Amritsar signed in 1846, giving complete control of Kashmir Valley and the surrounding areas like Gilgit and Ladakh to Gulab Singh. This is testified by the writings of Englishmen in India and by the establishment in England.

In India, the Anglo Indian Press was even in favour of abrogating the Treaty and directly by force, if necessary, annexing Kashmir into the British India. What actually spurred them in this direction was the dreams that were painted by some of the earliest Missionaries who had come to Kashmir. On the surface, the Aryan looks of the Kashmiris attracted them. The population was in their view totally backward, steeped in superstitions and totally right and ready for the gospel of Christ.

It was felt that modern medicine was the only route through which they could begin as physical suffering and illness treated and cured by British missionary doctors would open the way for further steps. Thus, a group of British Officers who were considered to be “India hands”, decided that the Church Missionary Society should first send medical missionaries (qualified doctors and nurses) to Kashmir and only then open just a little bit later schools and offer English education.

So it was that Sir.Robet Montgomery, Governor of Punjab, Sir.Herbert Edwards, Col.Martand, Col.Urmston (with who rests the honour of having put a stop to the burning of Hindu widows in Kashmir) met together to considered how best they could help Kashmir.

They all agreed that Kashmir needed spiritual as well as bodily health. So they subscribed Rs.14, 000 and sent it to the Church Missionary School Society, London, to send to Kashmir a medical Missionary, for he would gain the confidence of the people and they hoped and trusted that the Maharaja and his officials would welcome a doctor to their country.

A preliminary journey to reconnoitre the field was made in 1854 by the Rev.R.Clark, a Cambridge Wrangler and Colonel Martin, of the 9th Native Infantry. He had lately given anonymously ten thousand rupees to found the Punjab Mission, and in 1855 became an honorary C.M.S missionary at Peshawar. Gulab Singh was quite willing that they should

preach in his dominions, saying that the Kashmiris were so bad already that the padres could do them no harm, and he was curious to see if they could do them any good.

Rev.R.Clark made two more visits to Srinagar in 1862-63 and in 1864 his wife, a fully qualified Medical woman, opened a dispensary, which immediately attracted a hundred patients a daily. Subsequently, Dr.William Elmslie, the first Medical Missionary came to Kashmir and in May 1865 opened a dispensary on the verandah of his bungalow.

Thus, started the march towards a full-fledged hospital in Kashmir.

First Hospital

In 1866, two wooden buildings were erected close to Srinagar, one to serve as a dispensary and the other as a hospital. This was the first hospital seen in Kashmir. The first medical work especially for women was commenced in 1888 by the late Dr. Fanny Butler, a medical missionary of the Church of England Zenana Missionary society.

In 1891, the Kashmir State Leprosy Hospital was founded. The building was designed and erected and the work organized and carried on by Drs. Arthur and Ernest Neve as honorary superintendents; the cost of maintenance was borne by the Durbar.

The story of the growth of the Medical Mission under Dr.Elmslie and Maxwell and Downs and Arthur Neve has been told in Fifty years; a review, published in 1934.

“The development of medical work in the State during the last quarter of the 19th century was seen as dramatic. The trail was blazed by the Medical Mission. The Government Medical Department was likewise improved and is now perhaps the best organized of all the State Health Departments.

The mission also organized in 1871 a tour of Baltistan which is a remote and secluded province of Jammu and Kashmir State. They travelled over 400 miles, saw just over 2,000 patients and did 190 operations, major and minor in the villages of Baltistan. The Kashmir State gives an annual grant to the hospital.”

Selfless Service

Seventy years after the medical mission was established in the Kashmir Valley in 1866, it had become an institution on which people had come to depend. It provided succour to the sick and acted as an example to be emulated, as also a catalyst for further expansion of medical services in Kashmir.

By thirties of the 20th century, the media in British India began to take notice of the good work, which the medical missionaries were doing in Kashmir. The Pioneer dated April 16, 1936 reported:

“The Christian Missionary Society which was the first to introduce medical relief in the Kashmir state and still maintains two mission hospitals there has released its annual report on the Society’s working in 1935.

“It controls two hospitals, one in Srinagar and the other in Rainawari besides co-operating with the State authorities in sending relief missions in the interior of the State.

“The Srinagar hospital is under the charge of Dr. Ernest F. Neve. Its staff consisting of about 70 members, ministered to the needs of some 2000 in-patients and also to travellers coming from far beyond its borders, caring for all irrespective of creed or caste or colour.

“During summer, one of the periodic epidemics of cholera broke out in the main valley of Kashmir and would in all probability have become one of appalling magnitude but for the energetic and extraordinarily efficient preventive measures taken by the State Medical Department”.

Mr.Tyndale Biscoe, the pioneer of modern education in Kashmir valley says in his book “Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade” published in 1922:

“The people of Kashmir are fortunate in having much medical assistance for besides the two well equipped State hospitals in Srinagar, one for general public and another for women, there are dispensaries in all centres.”

Neve, The Healer

After the first Mission hospital was set up in 1865, in Srinagar, it had to wait for another 15 years before another doctor (in fact two doctors who were brothers) would come and become messiahs, healing the sick and the wounded.

Doctor Arthur Neve came to Srinagar in 1880. And was later joined by his brother Dr.Ernest Neve (and in 1893 by his niece Miss. Neve). Dr.Arthur Neve was the epitome of selfless service and endeared himself so much to the people that they would talk about their problems to him in Kashmiri, which the good doctor had already picked up.

When Dr.Arthur Neve died in September 1919, there was such a long procession following his body to the grave as had never been witnessed before, numbering two or three thousand. Not only did they weep, but showed their sorrow practically by meeting together next day to consider what suitable memorial to raise to their friend of nearly forty years.

His Hospital

“Conspicuous above the European quarter used to stand the group of buildings known all over Kashmir as Dr.Neve’s Hospital, a mission hospital which, with Mr.Biscoe’s School, was the most sincerely appreciated of all the efforts which Europeans have made for the welfare of the Kashmiri people. Last year (1921) no less than 22,735 new outpatients were treated, and the total number of visits amounted to 56,280., 1764 in patients, of whom 476 were females, were also treated; and 5038 surgical operations were performed.

“Sometimes over 200 outpatients, and on a few days over 300 outpatients, were treated in a single day. These figures speak for themselves. They show the confidence the people now have in the wonderful institution and the steady practical good it is doing. The heads of the hospital are the brothers Drs.Arthur and Ernest Neve; and they are assisted by Dr.Rawlence, Miss Neve, Miss Robinson, Mr.S.Wilson, and 54 native assistants and servants.

The hospital was founded in 1865 by Dr.Elmslie, who for many years had uphill work in starting the institution, but at length gained the confidence of the people and of the late Maharaja. Dr.Downes succeeded Dr.Elmslie, and carried the work forward. In 1881, Dr.Neve took it up. In that year 10,800 new patients were treated; there were 23,393 visits, and 1418 operations were performed.

“Year by year since then the good work has progressed. The original mud buildings have gradually been replaced by the present solid masonry structures. And the steady growth of the number of in-patients, and the readiness with which even upper-class women remain in the hospital, testify to the confidence with which the institution is now regarded. It is now renowned through all the north of India, and is a splendid testimony to the steady, thorough, and persevering work of two self-sacrificing men.

“The Society selected Dr.Elmslie, a Scot, who came to India as the first medical missionary. Dr.Elmslie arrived at Srinagar in the spring of 1864. His life was hard and difficult, for he had no hospital, his operations being performed under the trees; also orders were issued that people were not to visit the doctor, and sepoys were stationed around to keep them away, as the sick persisted in coming for relief. Several patients suffered imprisonment for disobeying the order of the authorities.

“Dr.Elmslie worked for eight years, and died in 1872, on his way out of Kashmir. The Rev.T.R.Wade worked with him, and did excellent work in the early days of the Medical Mission. The society then sent out Dr.Theodore Maxwell, to whom, because he happened to be the nephew of General John Nicholson, the hero of Delhi, the Maharajah granted a site for the Mission Hospital, on a hill called Rustom Gari, which lies below and is a continuation of the Takht-i-Suliaman. It is overlooking the Dal or City Lake.

“Dr. Maxwell remained until 1876, when ill health compelled him to retire, owing to continual worries. Meanwhile, there was a young artillery officer, named Edmund

Downes, who had resigned his commission in India in order that he might become a medical missionary, preparing for the work in Kashmir, so once again a soldier came to the relief of the down-trodden people of Kashmir.”

C.E.Tyndale Biscoe, Kashmir in Sunlight & Shade, 1922.

8

THE BISCOE AGE

“In all things be men”

Rev. Tyndale Biscoe wrote three books relating to his 57 years life in the Kashmir Valley from 1890 to 1947. The first one was “Kashmir In Sunlight and Shade”, published in 1922. The second one was “Men in the making”, while the third one, his autobiography entitled “Biscoe of Kashmir – an autobiography”. This was published soon after his death on August 1, 1948 at Salisbury (Harare) in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe).

The following pages contain excerpts from both these books about Biscoe Sahib’s lifelong crusade in Kashmir.

Remembering Biscoe

The only reminder of teacher, educationist, guide, friend, philosopher and man – Tyndale Biscoe in Kashmir, apart from the six Mission Schools, today is the fluency with which Kashmiris speak, read, write and even teach English that has now graduated from being the mother tongue of the Englishman to that of being an international language.

He not only brought English to the Valley, which opened the window to the world for the Kashmiris, but also discipline and qualities which he imparted to his thousands of students, which is aptly enshrined in the school motto “in all things be men”.

In every state in India, there have been selfless Englishmen who have served India by teaching, learning and giving. Grateful people have not forgotten them. In almost every case, State Governments honoured the educationists, scholars and professionals in practically every walk of life, who were Englishmen, part of the Raj, but selfless and devoted in their integrity and service.

But Kashmir has not done any such thing. There is no fellowship, scholarship, no state honour for the man who brought Kashmir into the 20th century, made Kashmir aware of the world around them and gave them modern knowledge, taught them compassion, dignity of labour and blending the body physical with the the soul and producing a wholesome likeable man or women.

The only sign of respect and regard for him was put up by his grateful students in the form of a small statue of his which was installed at the east side of the newly built Fateh Kadal near Diwan Temple. Even this was defaced and mutilated.

Today, a considerable portion of the State Revenue comes from tourism. It was Biscoe who developed the awareness among Kashmiris, the rest of Indians and Europeans and foreigners of the beauty of Kashmir and the ability to appreciate it. In fact, he was in a

way, the father of modern tourism in Kashmir.

Whatever tourist spots are being encashed by the Tourism Department of Jammu and Kashmir are all discoveries of Biscoe, namely, Neel Naag, Kaunsernaag, Ahrabal Falls, Dacchegam, Kolahai, Mahadev, Zabarwan and many more.

Kashmir has forgotten Biscoe, but Biscoe's disciples have not forgotten him. It is sad that for a man who gave so much to Kashmir, Kashmir has given nothing in return. He spent 57 years of his life in selfless service for Kashmir. Even his name has been forgotten. Sad and pathetic. A case of extreme ingratitude.

Biscoe Boys

Major General L.C. Dunsterville who has written the introduction to Tyndale Biscoe's Book on Kashmir, "*Kashmir in Sunlight & Shade*", 1922 relates an anecdote which illustrates amply the effect of English liberal education on the Kashmiri Pandit community.

"I was walking with a rather corpulent companion in Kashmir some years ago, when we came to a small stream about ten yards across and about two feet deep. I had on rough shooting boots and putties, and I do not mind getting my feet wet, so I crossed without further ado. My friend, however, disliked wet boots and looked about for some way out in a dilemma.

A rather frail- looking Kashmiri arrived at this juncture, and my heavy friend suggested in rather rough language that he should act as a beast of burden and convey his bulky form over the water. Without hesitation, the Kashmiri obeyed the request, crouching before the heavy gentleman to enable the latter to place himself comfortably on his shoulders. With legs rather bending beneath his burden, the docile carrier crossed the stream and placed my companion dry shod on the opposite bank.

Translating his gratitude into pecuniary form, the Englishman offered a silver coin to the late beast of burden and was surprised to receive the following answer in very good English: – "No, thank you sir. I am one of Mr. Tyndale Biscoe masters and I am glad to have helped you".

I have never seen anyone so dumbfounded as my friend, and as we continued our walk, he appeared to me to be thinking rather deeply."

Teacher comes to town

Canon Cecil Tyndale Biscoe was born in 1863 in a family with one daughter and seven sons. He graduated in 1886 from Cambridge University and was ordained as priest and appointed in the Bradfield Parish.

In 1890, he was selected by the Church Missionary Society (CMS), London, to go to Kashmir and help Rev.H.J.Knowels at his school in Fateh Kadal ,Srinagar, Kashmir. In November 1890, he arrived in Srinagar and initially stayed with the two famous Medical Missionary brothers Dr.Arthur and Ernest Neve who set up the Mission Hospital in Srinagar.

First Impressions

“The Munshi Bagh is situated up the river above the city. The distance to the C.M.S. School in the city by river is from two to three miles and by land about two miles. There were no roads as there was no wheeled traffic. When I mentioned the word “wheel” to the boys they asked what a wheel was, so I called for a blackboard. When I drew the spokes, they pointed to these and asked what use they were.

“We usually went to school by boat until I brought the first bicycle to Kashmir, which caused even more astonishment than did the first motor car many years later. My first cycle ride was at night. As I passed a coolie carrying a load, I hear a shriek and on looking back saw him on his back, shouting in terror: “I am dead! I am dead!” Poor fellow, he had heard much of djinis and had at last seen one with own eyes. What a grand tale he must have had to tell when he reached his home!

“I had now been at work in the school for more than a year, and had learnt more and more that what the Kashmir youth really needed was not books and talk, but action.

“I at once sent for the owner of a cow, which was starving and lying in two feet of snow, dying slowly. The owner , a Brahman, turned up first, “Is this your cow?” I asked. “Yes,” said he, “It is no use to me.” “But” said I, “look how it is being tortured.” “Ah,” said he, “it will die quicker”

Biscoe Sahib arranged for the Mission school boys to mount guard on the cow, ensure that it was not tortured by other animals and was allowed to die in peace, which it did couple of hours later. That was the Brahman boys and teachers’ first lesson, namely, to have mercy on their God-like animal. Since that day hundreds of animals have been rescued from pain by the boys of the C.M.S schools.

One day, I was teaching my class, when I heard a bugle call and looking up saw a figure on the roof of a house about half a mile away. I asked the boys what that meant. They answered that he must be a policeman blowing a bugle to warn the people that a house was on fire. The boys not being interested went on with their writing. Within a few minutes, I saw a flame and smoke rising from the place where the policeman was standing. I ordered the boys to stop writing and come with me to help at the fire, but they said it had nothing to do with them. They were not coolies, but “safed posh”. In other words, high bred gentlemen.

I drove them out of the classroom into the street, and herded them to the fire.

Arrived there, we found that scores of citizens had already taken their seats at every available place in order to enjoy themselves at an entertainment for which they would have nothing to pay. A woman came out of one of the burning houses, calling upon the spectators to come to her help. She told us that her husband was away, and she had no man to help her. Just in front of where I was standing was a long deodar beam. On it there sat five “gentlemen”. They were taking snuff and took no notice of the woman in distress.

The woman tried several times getting them to help her bring out her belongings and help to put out the fire. She then said: “I will pay you for every pot of water you bring.” (There were no buckets in the city of Srinagar in those days.) Some men asked how much she would give for every pot of water. When the price was mentioned, they all lost interest. She then doubled the price and at that sum the “gentlemen” moved off to search for pots.

I had, of course, ordered my boys to fetch as many pots as possible. Within a minute or so one of the boys came to tell me that there was a cargo boat coming up the river, laden with earthen pots, so I told my boys to purchase as many as they could carry. Well, the boys came back saying that the boatmen were not selling their pots today, so I went down to the river bank and called to the men in midstream and ordered them to bring the board ashore, but they told me they did not wish to sell the pots.

Boat Club

“On arrival in Kashmir in 1891, I found that the European community had a boat club. Colonel Sartorius, V.C., who was secretary, was leaving Kashmir, so I was asked to take his place and build some more rowing boats. Although I knew very little about building boats, I thought I might at any rate to learn. So, with the help of some friends who did know how to build boats, I superintended the work of carpenters who built them.”

Tyndale Biscoe, Kashmir In Sunlight & Shade, 1922.

So I called one of my big boys who could swim and told him to swim out to the boat and bring the boat ashore. When he climbed on board the boat, he seized a paddle and before long the boat was at our feet. I then said to the boys: “Help yourselves.” The boatmen were very angry saying that they would report me to the Governor and His Highness the Maharajah. As we heaped up the earthen pots on the shore., I held out to the man in charge twice as much as the pots were worth, but in his anger he refused to accept it. So I put it on the ground at his feet and we left with our loot.

We had not been long on our job of passing pots filled water with the burning houses when a boy came to me saying that the police were stealing all valuable property out of the burning houses. The police had pressed coolies to do this job and were collecting the stolen property into a barge lying in the river near the burning houses. So I sent off a fast

runner to the school to bring an armful of single sticks. When these arrived I handed them over to my teachers and strong boys, whom I placed round the salvaged property to keep away the police and anyone else who wished to steal. This was my first experience of a conflagration in Srinagar, hence it has been indelibly written on my memory.

After the fire was put out, tired and hungry, I was returning up the river to my home, when the boat dwellers were shouting out praise, such as “Bravo! Your smell has reached to Kabul and nearly to London.”

Disease & Holy men (1892)

In 1892, when I arrived at school, I heard that one of our Brahman students had been stricken, so went at once to his house, which I found deserted, everyone had run away except the stricken boy and his mother, whom I found lying on the floor, left by their relations to die.

As I was speaking to the boy, I heard an unearthly row outside. Men were shouting, a motor horn blaring, and the din was terrific. On looking out of the window, I saw 15 holy Sadhus, their faces and bodies covered with ashes and long daubs of red paint on their foreheads and noses. They were marching in single file, holding iron tridents in their hands, also wooden bowls which they held out, and shouting in unison as they stamped their feet: “If you do not give, you will die” as they went from house to house frightening the terrified women, thus forcing food from them.

I went down and asked the ringleader what he was doing. He answered: “collecting food”. So I naturally said: “Can’t you see what trouble the people are in, come and help them.” He answered: “That is not my job.” Who are you?” I asked. “A holy man,” said he. “You look it,” said I. I had a stick in my hand, so I waved this and said “quick march.” As they did not like the look of me and my raised stick, they thought it best to obey. I then went to a State Dispensary close by for help but the Indian doctor refused to come and sent the medicine with me by a servant to the patients I had just left.

Swimming is also education (1893)

This happened in 1893. Here are two instances where persuasion was needed. One of the principal Ministers of Kashmir requested me to prepare his son for Oxford University. He had already passed matriculation of the Punjab University.

I said that I would accept this responsibility on three conditions; one, he would pay the tuition fee in advance, two, he would permit me to teach him manners and three that I might teach him to swim. To these three conditions, he agreed. So I said: “Send him along.”

Most Respected Sir, – I most humbly and respectfully beg to bring to your kind notice that my son, Siri Bhan, student of the Lower School, is strictly prohibited by astrologers, who have examined his horoscope, from joining any playing party, etc. I would request

you to kindly keep him exempt from joining the playing teams and boating, etc. I beg to remain, etc.,

COMMENT: *If swimming was dangerous, God would not have created rivers.*

Tyndale Biscoe, Kashmir In Sunlight & Shade, 1922

At 7.30 a.m. he arrived at my house in good spirits, saying that he was ready for work. "That is good," I said, "but where is the tuition fee?" "My father will send it. He is a rich man." "That I know very well," said I, hence my desire to see the money in advance. "No money, no tuition, so off you run for the money." I had previously had money transactions with his father.

Within half an hour, he was back with a bag of rupees, which I counted to see that all was square – no counterfeit coins. Fortunately for him, all was correct. Manners, also satisfactory as payment had been prompt. Now for the third condition; lesson in swimming. "We will start at once for the lake." To that, he took strong exception, saying: "Sir, I cannot learn to swim. I am not a coolie, I am a gentleman." "That is interesting" said I. "Suppose you and your mother were walking by the side of the river and she fell in, what would you do?"

"Oh! I would call a coolie and send him in after her." "But suppose there was no coolie, what would you do?" To this question he had no reply ready.

So I said: "Mount your bicycle. We must start for the lake at once." We had gone only half a mile when he called out: Sahib, please stop, my bicycle is punctured." This was a fact, as he had been riding behind me, and jumped off, and certainly had punctured his tyre. "No matter," I replied, "just shove your cycle against the fence and we will walk the mile and a half to the lake." We did this, the son of this very rich Minister, although a "gentleman" received his first lessons.

Mission School boys saved 400 people from drowning. This is a record in the valley and the Mission School was the first to make swimming compulsory and life saving a part of the curriculum. The saddest part of that is that out of 400 boys whose lives were saved, only the parents of two boys came to thank the school, or the principal or the headmaster or the boys who actually saved their children from drowning.

Later on, I saw the boy at Cambridge. He was then cox of one of the Trinity boats and most thankful that he could swim like all the members of his college "coolie" crew.

Years passed, the son now an M.A., of Cambridge, and L.L.B. of Dublin as well, was back in his own country in an important position with His Highness the Maharajah of Jammu and Kashmir. In many ways, he helped the schools when in difficulty. He had become a gentleman, indeed!

The other instance was of a boy who came into my study asking for a discharge certificate. On my asking why he wished to leave the school, he said: "My father is unable to pay the school fees". But," said I, "your father is not a poor man, what fees do you pay?" When he told me the amount, which was about four times the ordinary monthly fee, I said: "Then you must be a non swimmer," (our school rule is that every boy must have passed the swimming test before thirteen years of age, unless under doctor's orders, and failing this, the school fees are increased by a quarter every twelve months to which he answered in the affirmative. So I said: "I gladly give you a leaving certificate, as I have no use for fools in this school, "As he was leaving my study, I said as a farewell: "I hope you will die from drowning." Before he had shut the door, I called him back, saying: "Will you please give your father this message from me that I hope he too will die from drowning".

I laid stress on my wish for his father as I guessed that it was his father who had prevented him from learning to swim, he being a Brahman Babu. Before an hour had passed, a card was brought to me, the messenger saying a gentleman wished to see me. It was the boy's father, who very humbly asked me to take back his son's leaving certificate, as he wished his son to learn to swim, so the boy returned and in a very short time passed the swimming test.

Birdwood (1919)

"Our annual swim this year across the Dal Lake was a red letter day for us. At the place on the lake side from where our boys were starting on their swim was a small encampment. Out of one of the tents came a British Officer who asked me what I was doing, and when I told him that the boys were going to swim across the lake, he became very interested and asked if he might join them. I told him that of course we should be honoured if he would take part.

"He went into the tent and was soon out again in bathing kit and swam off with the boys. I asked another officer who he was. He replied: "General Sir William Birdwood, the Commander – in – Chief." I had not recognized him, as it was over thirty years since I had met this delightful soldier. I am glad to say that it was not the last. The general did not realize what valuable help he was giving us for he was not aware of the attitude of the Kashmiris towards swimming and sport.

"At this particular time, there were over a hundred boys attempting the long swim and not one of their parents had bothered to come to see them, whereas here was the C.in-C. of India joining the Kashmir boys in this swimming contest.

(General Birdwood was responsible for setting up the Indian Military Academy (IMA) which opened in 1932. The first batch which passed out from the I.M.A included Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw.)

Tyndale Biscoe of Kashmir, An autobiography, 1949.

Carpentry and Pandits(1898)

In 1898, our school staff now looked like a family affair, with Augustus Tyndale plus my brother George. L'Estrange was a wrangler and was a great help in instructing our staff in higher mathematics, and Augustus an M.A. keen on history, and a proficient carpenter. We soon had a carpentry shop to help conquer the prejudice against carpentry as we had conquered opposition against football, boxing, swimming and much else. Also the carpentry in Kashmir as regards furniture was bad, glue and nails being used instead of mortices. In fact, furniture was just knocked together.

Dignity of Labour (1901)

One of the first carpenter Brahmins to face the anger of the Orthodox Brahmin's is still living (1947) and is one of the best furniture makers in Kashmir; not only has he learnt to be a master carpenter, but he has learnt to laugh. When we took him on, we could not persuade him even to smile; he had a perpetual scowl. Augustus cured him and later he became carpenter instructor to British schoolboys.

Geography and Beliefs (1901)

When teaching physical geography, one often came across strong objections. The boys told me that my teaching was contrary to their holy books. For instance, they said that their priests taught them that the world was as flat as a plate, whereas I tried to make them believe that it was round like a football. And again, the priests had told them that the sea was made of melted butter and sugar. So I thought that the best way for them to discover who the liar was was for them to go down to the sea and drink the water.

I promised to pay the expenses of any three of the staff who would make the journey of discovery, but no one was willing to accept my offer until 1901, i.e. my eleventh year at the school. The three brave men who were willing to taste the seawater were Mr. Shanker Koul, Mr. Mohammed Razdan and Mr. Din Mohammed. I arranged for them to go to Karachi and from there by sea to Bombay.

Shortly after their return, I asked them if they had visited any Brahmin priests since their return. "Yes," said they, "We told them that the sea water was salt, but the priests replied that we could not have been to the sea, for the sea is made of melted butter and sugar."

Although we had not converted the priests to the truth, whenever we met with opposition in the school to our teaching on this and similar subjects, we could call up the three Kashmiri teachers to give their evidence. I believe that if one of our boys were asked today questions about such matters, his replies would be much the same as those of an English boy.

Educating Pandits was a mistake (1903)

On one of my visits outside the Valley, I first went to Delhi and from there to the delightful home of Colonel George Strahan at Dehra Dun. The Colonel was a great landscape painter. When I went into his studio he said: “ Please take any paintings you like.” I chose one of Pahalgam, because his tent was in the foreground where I had visited him about 10 years previously when recovering from typhoid. He was the first Britisher who showed any interest in our schools or wished me God speed. The Sahibs in those days thought that by educating the Kashmiris we were making a mistake; that an educated thief is more dangerous than an uneducated one. They could, or would not, believe that we were character building and not interested in turning out just B.A., and failed B.A.s.

Pandits’ attitude to drinking (1906)

I had been invited by a Kashmiri Pandit gentleman to attend a temperance meeting in Srinagar. There was a large audience to listen to the speakers who talked at great length.

A Hindu friend, who afterwards accompanied me part of my way home, and told me how interested he was in the temperance movement. I told him that I thought there was no need for a temperance society in Srinagar as yet, there were no public houses and I had hardly ever seen anyone drunk. Indeed, if we talked about drunkenness, it might draw the attention of the Kashmiris to drinking intoxicating liquors and might do more harm than good.

However, he did not agree with me and started his temperance society. He collected from his friend’s money for tables, chairs, and carpets in order that the meetings could be held in comfort. At the second temperance meeting, a speaker said: “What is the use of our talking about temperance if we do not know what drunkenness is? Would it not be better at our next meeting to bring bottles of brandy and drink until we are drunk, then we shall know how drunkards suffer”. So at their next meeting brandy was brought, and they drank themselves silly. When they became sober, they agreed that drunkenness was more exciting, and pleasanter than temperance, so these temperance meetings were not a success.

Head Master Shanker Koul (1907)

“What Shanker does not know is not worth knowing”

My Punjabi Christian Head Master asked for a year’s leave, which I granted. As I needed a man in his place, I put an advertisement in the *Civil and Military Gazette, Lahore* as follows: “Wanted a headmaster for the C.M.S. schools in Kashmir; no one with proud look or high stomach need apply to the Rev.C.E.Tyndale –Biscoe.”

By return of post, I received a postcard from the Head of the Cambridge Mission in Delhi, saying: “We have all been very sorry to see your advertisement in the Civil and

Military Gazette, for you have upset the whole of Delhi.” That was a bad business! But nevertheless, I received seventy applications for the post. But I could accept not one, for I could see by their letters that they had high stomachs and I guessed that proud looks were above these stomachs. So failing to find a suitable man from the colleges in India, I appointed one of our staff, Mr. Shanker Koul, who remained our headmaster for forty years, a record.

No school could have had a more capable leader of boys and a more loyal worker. A very successful teacher in the classroom, but as a leader in all social services for the welfare of his country, he was superb. From being a leader in preventing cruelty to animals, he tackled a far greater evil, cruelty to women. Out of the hundreds of instances of tackling cruelties to animals I will mention an amusing one.

I was standing in the school compound and happened to look at the entrance gate, which was under an arch, when lo and behold a pair of donkey’s ears appeared, so high up that they could hardly pass under the arch. Then gradually, as this apparition came into fuller view, I perceived that a donkey was riding on man’s back, its forelegs sticking out over the man’s chest. Shanker Koul then explained that as he came to school, he saw a little donkey doing its best to carry a man nearly as big as itself, so he thought it better that the man should carry the donkey. He made the two change places, in fairness to the donkey.

Leather, Ball & Play (1910)

I felt sure that the introduction of games would give the boys a sense of fairplay and sportsmanship, which they so much needed. The first obstacle to be overcome was the objection of the Brahman youth to touching leather. As the cricket ball has a leather cover, it had to be handled in such a manner that their hands did not come in contact with the unholy leather.

Fortunately, the boys in those days wore “pherans”, a long garment like a nightgown, with sleeves five feet in length, so that by keeping their hands up their sleeves they had the cloth of their garment between their hand and the untouchable cricket ball. When they had to stop or catch a ball they spread out their knees, or between their legs and thus stooped or caught the ball. So a game of cricket as played by the C.M.S schoolboys was a well-conducted comic opera from start to finish. It took almost two years to persuade these Brahman teachers and boys that the gods would not be angry if they permitted the leather ball to touch their skins.

The next sport to which we tried to introduce them was sliding on the ice. My first winter happened to be a severe one. The canal near our school was frozen, so I suggested that they should come with me and learn the art of sliding. They all wore wooden clogs, as even leather boots were anathema to them in those days. They objected to my proposal, saying that their fathers told them that ice was very slippery and that they would probably fall and hurt themselves.

However, I at last persuaded them to come with me to watch me slide, and see how quickly one became warm by this exercise in cold weather. But I advised them to leave their fire pots on the ground, and not carry them under their nightgowns, as was then the practice of every teacher and boy when the weather was cold. Most of them followed my advice, but one or two refused to take it and they soon learnt that my advice was well founded. Before the day was over, the boys had discovered that a fall on the ice was not very dangerous, though at times a little painful.

It was not long before they became keen and agreed that it was good fun. So that fight was soon won. But two boys had yet to learn that ice and firepots were not brothers. They were squatting comfortably on the ice with their fire pots well covered by their nightgowns and enjoying the warmth rising up their bodies and out at their necks, when suddenly they and their firepots had a very cold involuntary bath.

What is a football?

When I brought my bride to Kashmir in November 1891, I brought also a leather football. When I held it up before the assembled school they asked, what is that?

T-B It is a football.

Boys what is the use of it?

T-B. For playing a game.

Boys Shall we receive any money if we play that game?

T-B No!

Boys Then we will not play that game.

Boys What is it made of?

T-B Leather.

Boys Take it away! Take it away!

T-B Why should I take it away?

Boys Because it is jutha (unholy) we may not touch it, it is leather.

T-B I do not wish you to handle it. I want you to kick it (it was a soccer ball) and today you are going to learn how to kick it, boys.

Boys We will not play that jutha game.

So instead of the usual English lesson with the top class, where many of the boys had whiskers and beards and some were married and had children, I then described the game and, with the help of the blackboard, drew a map of a football ground, showing the position of the players, etc.,

I then called the teachers, who were all Brahmans, and ordered them to go ahead to picket certain streets to prevent the boys running away before they reached the public common. When all was ready, I gave the orders to proceed to this common and shooed them on like sheep or cattle to market. It was a great sight never to be forgotten. All these so-called boys shuffling along the street wearing their wooden clogs, carrying their firepots under their flowing pherons on their way to play football. Some were wearing huge gold earrings, some had nose rings and all of them wore their caste marks.

I soon had the goal posts up and the teams in their proper places as I had shown on the blackboard.

There was a crowd of townsfolk, which was growing every minute, all eager to see what new mischief this foolish young sahib was up to now. When everyone was in his proper place, I put the football in the centre of the ground and ordered the centre forward, a boy with a nice black beard, to kick off.

The black-bearded Brahman looked at me, then at the crowd of his fellow co-religions standing around, and then hung his head, remaining motionless. I again gave the order, "Kick!" but still nothing happened. So I said: "I will give you five minutes to think, and then something will happen which you will not like." What was going to happen I had not the slightest idea, but fortunately I had armed my teachers with single sticks, in order to drive the boys to the common. So I lined up the teachers at the goals and told them that when they heard me shout out "kick" should the order not be obeyed immediately, they were at once to rush from the goals at the teams waving their single sticks, and shouting blue murder for all they were worth.

As the five minutes was reduced to the last ten seconds, I called out: "10 seconds left, 9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1. Kick!! And down came the teachers shouting and waving their single sticks. Off went that ball and in five seconds all was confusion, for the boys forgot their places on the field, or that they were holy Brahmans, and a rough and tumble began. As they tried to kick the ball, but generally missed it, their clogs flew into the air and their pugaris were knocked off while their nightgowns flapped in one another's faces; a real grand mix-up of clothes and humanity.

Then all of a sudden there were sounds of agony and horror and the game stopped. A boy was brought to me sobbing, with his horror-stricken friends around him, for this Brahman boy had the unholy leather kicked bang into his face. What was he, or they, to do?

A truly terrible predicament, what could the gods be thinking about it all? I told them to take him to the canal close by and wash him. Away went the crowd with the defiled boy and for the moment there was peace. Back came the washed boy and the rest of the

players, all of whom to my surprise at once resumed the game and continued until I called time. Then all the sightseers and teams went off to their houses to give their various accounts of this first game of football played by Brahmans in Kashmir.

But, and a big but, when the black-bearded boy reached his home, the news of his wickedness had reached his parents before his arrival. He was not allowed to enter his home and so defile their house. For three months, he was not permitted to enter his own home, but some relation, less bigoted, took pity on him and gave him a home.

Sycophancy (1910)

Some years ago, it was no uncommon sight to see one of the staff standing before me with hands clasped in the attitude of prayer, with his head on one side, and possibly the toes of one foot scratching the other bare leg, asking for a favour. The sight was a sickening one! A so-called man, standing like a slave before a slave-driver. Those days are gone!

The slave chains were not struck off with one blow. It took years. Various happenings brought this about, constant intercourse out of school; going trips together on the mountains or on the lakes, where we shared fatigue, and more than once, passed nights without sleep; many upsets in river and lakes; and once and again in danger in fires; and squalls on the lakes when sailing, for it has been a tradition with us—a very foolish one, no doubt—not to take in a reef, but to trust to the shifting ballast of a dozen or so of the crew to the windward gunwale. These are the times when we get to understand one another.

Head Master Sridhar Bhat, Anantnag (1914)

A boy called Shridhar Bhat came to the school and, in course of time, became headmaster. He possessed an outstanding character for courage, kindness and determination and his great joy in life was that of uplifting the Kashmiris.

Whilst he was a master in the school, a lady missionary, Miss Annie Coverdale, started a school for girls. She and Shridhar Bhat did everything they could for each other's schools. If anyone congratulated Shridhar Bhat on his success with his school and in social service, he always said it is all due to Miss Coverdale's example and help.

Millie Coverdale lived with Dr. Minny Gomery and Miss Katie Newnham at the C.M.S mission hospital at Anantnag. They had devoted their lives to the women of this town and district for years. It was most strenuous work and we all marvelled at their strength and courage. Miss Coverdale eventually retired to England but was unfortunately one of the many victims in an air raid. She and her sister's cottage at Bexhill received a direct hit from a bomb. In the hereafter, many will call her blessed.

Election of Shankar Koul to the Municipal Council (1916)

At this time, the city of Srinagar was excited over its Municipal election. Our headmaster, Mr. Shanker Koul, was asked to stand and was naturally backed up by all who wished to have an honest municipal officer. When our masters and old boys presented themselves at the election booths, they found it impossible to vote as the municipal secretary was there with hooligans to prevent them voting, so we had to send some lusty fellows to see fair play, and Mr. Shanker Koul was duly elected.

Now I would like you to know something of the life and character of Mr. Shanker Koul our Headmaster, who was now an honourable member of the municipality of Srinagar.

He came to the mission school in 1892 together with two boys from the state school. Their first half-morning's work was finished when the bell rang for them to go into the playground for the twenty minutes' exercise, drill, boxing and gymnastics.

When I ordered my class to shut their books and to go the playground, these three new boys said that they had come to school to learn and not to play. So I told them that this school was not a lunatic asylum and that, if they did not wish to have their bodies trained, they had better return at once to the state school. I then forced them downstairs to the playground and put them in line with the squad fronting the parallel bars and, when their turn came to perform, they refused to mount the parallel bars. So I took out my watch and told them that I would give them five minutes to think the matter over and then something would happen. Something did happen. Shanker Koul was on the parallel bars but his arms were too weak to hold himself there, so two boys were called to support him on each side.

When this first exercise was finished, we dealt with the other two newcomers in the same way. All three boys accepted this treatment with good grace, and, later on, all three became gymnastic instructors and thankful that they had come to the school.

To speak of Shanker Koul's life at the C.M.S schools and the enormous amount of useful work and brave deeds that he has performed would fill volumes. He was the leader of the boys at fires in the city, at epidemics of cholera, and when the Jhelum river overflowed its banks, causing destruction and distress all around. He was in the vanguard too in preventing cruelty to animals, and in rescuing women and girls from impure devils. He also did useful work in standing up to the state officials when they tried to harm our schools and was always ready to join battle with anyone who decried the school.

By July 1899, The Mission School had 44 Kashmiri teachers (in those days they were called masters). Three of them were Christians, five were Muslims 36 were Kashmiri Pandits. Nearly all of them were old boys of the Mission Schools where they had studied under the supervision of Tyndale Biscoe. They all worked loyally for much less pay than they would have got in Government service.

Sati & Widow marriage (1928)

To give an idea of what views the elder boys held regarding Sati, I relate the following incident. The boys were about twenty years old, and married. I was reminding them of what the British had done for India, such as founding hospitals, fighting famines, cholera, and bubonic plague, &c., and also how they had put a stop to the cruel practice of Sati. When I mentioned the last item, a black bearded fellow jumped to his feet and the following revealing conversation ensued:

The black-bearded boy asked: "Why did the British interfere with our religion?"

T-B I was not talking about religion, but cruelty,

B.-B.B But Sati is our religion.

T.B. Do you wish your Brahman widows to be burnt alive?

B.-B.B Of course we do, it is our religion, it is God's order.

T.B Have you a mother and father?

B.-B.B Yes.

T.B When your father dies do you wish to see your mother?
burnt alive?

B.-B.B Of course I do

And then all the youths in the class jumped up and shouted out "Of course we do, it is our religion". I then turned to one of the youths who was especially vociferous, and asked if he had a sister, and was she married? He answered in the affirmative. I said to him: "When your brother-in-law dies do you wish to see your sister burnt alive?" He answered: "Of course I do, it is my religion."

I then asked them: "Suppose it was the other way round and God's order that the Brahman husbands should be burnt alive when their wives died. How would you like that?" At this suggestion, the whole class roared out: "That is not religion."

Although I was somewhat flabbergasted at this outburst, I was glad to discover where I stood. It made it quite clear how I should have to tackle the inhuman and unmanly views they held towards women. It also made me more than ever determined, with the help of God, turn these youths from religious fanatics into MEN. All cruel customs in the city of Srinagar practiced against the weak, whether on men, women or animals, must be fought and done away with, as my grandfather had succeeded in putting a stop to the cruel sport of bull baiting in England, one hundred years before.

Sacred Bull

“One familiar sight in the bazaars is the Brahmani sacred bull, swaggering down town with his rakish black india-rubber sort of hump swaying from side to side as he walks. He seems to have the run of all the greengrocer shops by the way; he shoves his nose on the counters and marches off munching the vegetables he has pinched in passing. Everybody makes way for him. That he expects respect from all can be seen by the look in his insolent eye.”

Tyndale Biscoe, Kashmir In Sunlight & Shade, 1922.

We were unable to alter the satanic Brahman laws regarding widows but we could save our own widows in future from being forced to live impure lives. So there and then we started a pension fund for the widows of the school staff. Every master had to pay a portion of his monthly wage into this fund and I promised that a like sum would be paid monthly from the school treasury. With this pension the widow would be able to be free of her late husband’s family and could live the life she chose.

The Dixon Fund, called after *Mr. John Dixon of Pitlochry*, who started it with a gift of Rs 50, grew year by year by year until it totaled Rs.125, 000. To-day, it is helping thirty widows. But this effort of the mission school was only a drop in the ocean. What was needed was to get the law altered, but that seemed to us at that time impossibility, yet we never lost hope.

We were destined to go on pegging away for another twenty years before the first re-marriage of a Brahman widow took place in Kashmir. It was performed at Mattan, a place holy to the Brahmans, through the courageous action of Sridhar Bhat, the Headmaster and his staff of the C.M.S. School at Anantnag. But it was not accomplished without opposition, physical force, and a little blood spilling.

On a May morning in 1928 at six-thirty, Shanker Koul, Headmaster of the C.M.S. school, Srinagar, led his school staff and 100 old students, all Brahmans, to a house where two Brahman bidegrooms, who were brave enough to face the music, were ready to march to a house a mile distant, where two young Brahman widows were also prepared to face the ordeal. Shanker Koul had arranged with three Brahman priests to perform the marriage ceremonies. But their courage had failed and they bolted. So one of our school staff, a Brahman priest, married them. This marriage caused a great uproar in the city. But like all storms, this one blew itself out in time.

Shortly afterwards Shanker Koul led a deputation of old school students to His Highness the Maharajah to ask him to enact a State Law, permitting the re-marriage Hindu widows. But their request was refused. Undismayed, two years later, he tried his luck again with the help of Mr. Wakefield who was Secretary to His Highness, and this time his request was granted.

Widows can remarry

H.H.Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir, issued a proclamation as follows:

“Whereas bearing in mind the advance in ideas recently made in Hindu Society, the recognition by the majority of Hindus that the incapacity of Hindu widows to contract a second valid marriage is harmful to Hindu society and the progress made all over the world as also in other parts of India towards the enfranchisement of women, we consider that the removal of bostaclejs to remarriage of Hindu widows in the State of Jammu and Kashmir will lead to promotion of good morals and to the public welfare. “

The Maharaja went on to announce the promulgation of new legislation providing inter alia that :

No marriage contracted between Hindus shall be invalid and the issue of no such marriage shall be illegitimate by reason of the woman having been previously married or betrothed to another person who subsequently died any custom and any interpretation of Hindu law to the contrary, notwithstanding.

A Hindu widow shall not by reason of her remarriage forfeit any property or any right to which she would otherwise be entitled; and every widow who remarries shall have the same rights of intheirtance as she would have had, had such marriage been her first marriage.

In the case of a widow not under 16 years of age, or whose marriage has been consummated, her own consent shall be sufficient to constitute her remarriage as lawful and valid. But in the case of a minor widow she shall not be remarried without the consent of her male relatives.

The Hindu, 1,05.1933.

The re-marriage of Hindu widows became law in Kashmir, but the Brahman Sabha refused to accept it. The President, however, of the Yauk Sabha (grandson of a late much-feared President of the Brahman Sabha who was a great enemy of the C.M.S schools) persuaded his party to put an end to the persecution and cruelties perpetrated on Hindu widows, and so at long last brought victory. I never expected in my lifetime to witness this miracle.

I have for fifty years witnessed the results of the cruelties perpetrated on Hindu widows and also the wonderful acts of chivalry performed by our school staff and old students, which, if put on paper, would fill a book and would, I expect, receive the same torrent of abuse as did Miss Mayo’s book, Mother India. No reformers can escape, curses. But what matter! Think of those who fought the slave trade. They were even threatened with death.

Wular Lake Challenge (1929)

I now come to an important event, the first swimming of the dreaded Wular Lake, which at its narrowest point was five miles wide. About ten years previously, I had taken the twelve-oared cutter with a crew of twelve Brahman, teachers and a few passengers to introduce them to the joys of boating.

The Kashmiris are terribly frightened of the Wular Lake on account of storms that now and again blow up. As all the boats are flat-bottomed, not built to face storms, they often capsize and the crews and passengers, being non-swimmers, are drowned. These deaths are supposed to be caused by djinns, or the god of the lake.

We had not left the shore many minutes when a breeze sprang up and the boat began to heel over and toss a little. This put the “wind up” those on board and they started to call out to their gods, Ram and Shiva. Some quite lost their heads and began to weep, thinking of their loved ones at home safe on terra firma whom they would never see again. They threw out handfuls of rice and sugar as baksheesh to their gods. I am afraid, I was unsympathetic and, like Elijah of old, told them to cry aloud to their gods, for perchance they slept. In a short while, the god of the lake had pity on them, the wind dropped and our boat was soon on an even keel. We took to our oars and were shortly at our destination across the lake.

Arrived there, we found much stir among the people, who told us that the day before there had been a heavy storm and eighteen fishermen had been drowned. On my asking why they had not swum ashore, they said that no one around the lake could save their lives by swimming for the djinns always pulled them under the water, so what was the use of learning to swim.

Our school teachers seemed much upset at this tragedy, so I said to them: “Don’t you think that it is up to us to do something about this? Surely the Mission School should teach these Wular Lake folk how to avoid such happenings in future. You fellows must swim across this lake, and show them that it is possible to save their lives by swimming.” The teacher said this was impossible. So I said we should have to make the impossible possible.

With this determination in our minds, we set to work when we returned to Srinagar to tackle the impossible. We made it a rule that every boy in the schools should have passed the swimming test of 70 yards by the age of thirteen, otherwise his father would have to pay extra fees. Many parents objected to this rule. My answer was: “Take your son away and put him in a school where they like non-swimming gentlemen.” We won through and some hundreds of boys passed the swimming test every year.

At last, the day arrived when I thought the attempt to swim across the dreaded Wular Lake might be made. So, on a beautiful September morning in 1906, we arrived at the lake, having travelled the thirty miles down the river from Srinagar in our dhoonga. At 7 a.m, the swimmers dived into the lake for the five-mile swim to the farther shore, three

Brahman teachers, one Mohammedan and myself, Dr.Sam Barton accompanied us in a boat in case any of the swimmers should need medical attendance.

The first half-mile of the swim was a trifle dangerous owing to the weeds. After that, the water was deep and clear until we reached the shingle beach at a village nestling under a pretty twin-peaked hill. On the top of one of the peaks is a tomb sacred to a Mohammedan saint named Baba Shukr-U-Din, to whom the boatmen are accustomed to give money to secure a safe passage across the dreaded lake. It was a very pleasant swim except for the sun, which gave me a sore back for a day or two. Three of the swimmers found the swim too much for them, and climbed into the boat following us; but Darim Chand and I reached the village beach. The dreaded Wular Lake had been swum. The impossible had been made possible.

Honour Boards

In the school hall, are the honours boards, not as in our public schools in England, proclaiming only scholars and athletes, but for body, mind and soul.

No. 1 Board. For pluck, skill and endurance. Those who have swum five miles across the Wular Lake or the eight miles across the Dal Lake and down the river to the school: or have leaped from the roof of the school, fifty feet up, into the river.

No.2 Board, the top boy in the school with the most marks for body, mind and soul.

No.3 Board. Those who have risked their lives for others. The pluckiest deed each year, chosen from the various instances of life saving in the year. In one year thirty lives were saved by members of the C.M.S schools.

No.4 Board. The kindest deed to an animal.

No.5 Board. Those who have given their lives for others and on that board hangs the beautiful picture of Jesus Christ, “The Light of the World”, who has shown us the way.

Babu ethics (1938)

A certain Inspector of Schools, after he had inspected the C.M.S school at Islamabad, wrote out two reports, one for me to see, and the other for the Minister of Education, who he knew would not like to see a good report of our school.

By mistake, his clerk had sent me both reports. In the report intended for me, he wrote: “This is a good school” and then described our activities, but there was one drawback and that was that the school building was hired, not ours. (We were not allowed in those days

to build our own schoolhouse). In the report intended for the Minister of Education, he wrote: "The C.M.S. school at Islamabad is a bad school and the reason for boys attending that school is that many scholarships were given (which was quite untrue) and the only redeeming point about this school is that the house in which it is situated is satisfactory."

These two reports I placed in the school museum as objects of interest. I also sent a message to the Inspector saying that when I next met him, I would pull his ears; in consequence the Inspector never wished to inspect our schools again and always succeeding in avoiding me. Some years afterwards, he sent his two sons to our school, and on being asked by the headmaster the reason, he replied that his sons would be disciplined there.

Pandit Christians (1939)

We were at our holiday hut at Nil Nag, in the month of August 1939, when two of our teachers, Govind Razdan, a widower, Sham Lal and his wife, and an old boy, Kashi Nath and his wife, asked me to baptize them. They had for years been very keen on all kinds of social service, so I knew by their lives, as well as by their words, that they were truly persons to be received into the Christian Church. On Sunday morning, I took them to the lake and baptized them.

We, and they, of course were well aware that when they returned to Srinagar, they would have to suffer persecution from the Brahmans, and they did.

About a month later we were at school again, when the old boys of the school arranged for a dinner in honour of our revered friend Bishop Barnet of Lahore. On that occasion 150 old boys sat down to a meal. They were of various religious castes and classes. It was a great joy to all of us who had been striving for so many years to break down caste prejudices, to see this great number of old boys entertaining our Bishop. My thoughts naturally went back to the days when the Brahman members of my school staff had to throw away all their food because my shadow had fallen upon it.

Not many days passed, before we heard that the teachers whom I had baptized, were in danger from their fellow Brahmin. Govind Razdan was the first to be attacked by hooligans while crossing one of the city bridges. Fortunately for him, one of the policemen near by was an old boy of our school and he rescued him from the angry crowd. A few days later Sham Lal was going from my house to his home in the city, after dark, when he was attacked and so badly hurt that he had to be taken to hospital. The man who was the cause of this attack was a Brahman policeman. Then came Kashi Nath's turn. He was employed by a motor omnibus company and was taking a bus full of Brahmans to one of the most

holy places in Kashmir named Tula Mula, where a goddess is supposed to live in a tank. After landing his party at the holy spot, he was attacked by the worshippers, but fortunately there were Mohammedans at hand who came to

his rescue and saved him. In 1940, according to Biscoe Sahib's autobiography ten more Pandits were baptized as Christians.

Tyndale Biscoe of Kashmir, an Autobiography

Old boys recall

Young boys when they join school are shy, hesitant, not yet fully developed physically but as years roll, they develop the muscles, improve their mental powers and generally race towards manhood. It is interesting that the motto of the school "In all things be men" – lays stress on the word man.

Young boys turn into grown-up boys and subsequently they become old boys. In his 57 years career of service, Tyndale Biscoe trained, taught and made men out of boys.

One of them, M.N.Koul recalls the days when he was being moulded into a young man at Mission School, Fateh Kadal.

"I was a student of the school for 10 years, leaving the premier institution in 1937 after matriculation.

"He has mentioned the names of some teachers of the school and has also bracketed their pet-cum nicknames without giving their connotation. In fact, there is meaning behind each nickname. Here I will deal with one such name, that of Master Nank Chand nicknamed Batuk. Batuk, as you know, means duck in Kashmiri.

"In those days, boat race, called Regatta, was held on Tuesdays in Gagribal Lake. Boats were manned by the students of the branch schools, about six of them. Besides, a couple of six-oared and one 12-oared boats, all manned by teachers, participated in the gala event. The main items of the competition were: Relay race, cosmopolitan race, duck race and finally the sinking of paddle – rowed boats. In the duck race, the main role was played by Nank Chand. He covered his head with the lake weed which camouflaged him from the surroundings of the lake. It was a hide-and –seek game. The manoeuvres of this "master", ducking under water and even under boats, gave a tough time to the hunters. Finally, the team which caught hold of the "duck" won the game. Thus the teacher assumed the name – Nana Batuk.

"Shri Safaya has written that Nanak Chand, by his duck-like actions, saved his colleagues during a sailing storm in Wular Lake. This is factually incorrect and I give the facts of the Wular tragedy."

“The teaching staff of the C.M.S. Schools used to have an annual outing. This time to Wular Lake. It was on the fateful day of April 11, 1934, when Nanak Chand and six other adventurous young teachers took a fancy to have a joy ride in the lake. They erected an improvised sail on the six – oared boat. Nanak Chand was at the steering (rudder). In the beginning, the wind was unidirectional and of low intensity. The boat kept on sailing smoothly. But as the boat reached towards the deeper side of the lake (Watlab), the wind turned into a furious storm creating a deep whirlpool. The boat capsized and all the seven teachers with their woollens on were drowned. The toppled boat and sail ropes turned into a death – trap for them. Nanak Chand, the duck and an expert swimmer, was no more. He could not save himself, not to speak of saving his six colleagues.

“This tragedy gave a grievous shock to our family because one of the seven victims was my maternal uncle, Pt.Dina Nath Warikoo of Rainawari, an all rounder and a brilliant young man of 28 years. I was a student of Class VII that time. I vividly recall that moment when we received the news of his demise on the third day of the tragedy. The untimely and tragic death of the seven young teachers, who lived in different localities of Srinagar, engulfed the whole city in a pall of gloom and deep mourning. As many as 66 years have gone by and it is a part of history now.

M.N.Koul, Koshur Samachar, June 2000.

Down Memory Lane

Another old boy, D.N.Koul goes down memory lane to resurrect for us the family connection that he had with the Mission School.

Shri Nana Koul (not Nankjoo) was my father. He was very adept in swimming and would swim and dive like a duck and so was given the sobriquet of ‘The Duck’ by Shri Biscoe himself.

It was the annual feature of the C.M.S school staff to go for “Wular Cross”

In April. On the fateful day of April 11, 1934, my father sent the other boats to cross the lake before 4 p.m. Sh.Shambho Nath Khosa, my mamaji who was in the other boat, got himself exchanged for a teacher from this boat. My father with six other colleagues, including Shri Khosa, left Bandipora after 4p.m. It is usually said that it is not safe to cross the lake after 4 p.m

Unfortunately, while crossing the lake, they were caught in a raging hailstorm accompanied by strong gale in which all the seven members of the crew, bracing the onslaught, lost their lives. A lot of sand was found in my father’s nails presuming that he might have tried to find the other five drowned colleagues.

There have been many an eventful incident in Shri Nana Kaul's short span of life and I quote a few here:

He would collect the children of the Mohalla (both Hindu and Muslim) and would take them to the Tsunt Koal for coaching. Their mothers would not dare to say "no" but their breath would stop till their sons would return safe. He as the first person in Kashmir to make a boat, which could be rowed with cycle paddles. A boat stood tugged at our ghat at Sathu. We sold it to a boatman at Chinar Bagh after his death. He was the best scoutmaster as per the certificate I found later in his boss. He was also a good carpenter. Shri Biscoe had sent him for carpentry training to Bareilly. We had four boxes full of tools, which we often lent to neighbours. Once a carpenter who worked in our house did not accept the wages saying that he was the taught of Nana "The Loin".

Shri Nana Kaul had also got a projector from Bareilly after completing his training there. It could be operated both with power and dynamo. It had 250 reels of 8 mmlimeter like Quid Pro Quo (3 reels), Bullfight, swimming and diving, Ali Baba and Forty Thieves, etc. It must have been 1930 or 1931 when there were no cinema houses in Srinagar. It was a great amusement and fun for the family and for the mohallawallas. He would show these films in the Vout (lower story) of a neighbour – big enough to accommodate some 50 to 60 members. Sometimes he would take the projector to his in-laws at Banamohalla and lots of people would gather there. He would also show these films at his school in Fateh Kadal. Alas the old projector along with other belongings could not be retrieved when we fled the place. To sum up, he was an all – rounder as the school motto reads: "In All Things Be Men".

While concluding, I would like to pay my respects to the Biscoe family for showing compassion and benevolence to our family. Only last year, Shri Hugh, Shri Eric Biscoe's son, had visited India with his family and also paid a visit to us at Shalimar Garden. We had lunch together and he spent the day with us talking about the good old days in the school.

Dwarkanath Koul Koshur Samachar, Jan.2001

Roll of Honour

A roll of honour normally gives details of the achievements of students both in the field of scholarship and in the field of sports. But in this case, we are recording for posterity, names of some of those sacrificing individuals who as teachers dedicated their lives to produce, train and educate boys who would be MEN. We wish we had the names of all those wonderful teachers who served.

Following are the names of some of Biscoe soldiers but, we are sorry we do not have names of many more stalwarts who served in the Mission Schools.

Shanker Koul	Sham Lal
Sridhar Bhat	Dina Nath Matto
Nand Lal Bakaya	Prithvi Nath Razdan
Samsar Chand Kaul	Shambu Nath Matoo
Ishar Kaul (Dhabu, Ishi Kakh)	Govind Kaw
Chander Pandit	Tikka Lal
Shambu Nath Kachru	Kanth Kaul
Niranjan Nath Fotehdar	Govind Razdan
Shyam Lal	Bala Koul
Janki Nath	Dwarki Nath

9

The English Era

Language Is the Key

In the past seven centuries, Kashmir has seen Mughal, Afghan and Dogra rule. Whenever there was a change of rule the language of administration also changed. By nature and inclination, the Kashmiri Pandits are very much for education, whether they are well to do or poor and it was but natural that they were inducted into the administration by whoever was the ruler of the day in the valley.

After 1338 AD, Kashmir came under Muslim rule and by the time the Mughal Empire was at its peak the language used for administration was Persian and Urdu especially for communication within the military hierarchy. For Kashmir, which has been a part of the Mughal Empire, the same rules apply and those who were educated in the formal sense had to know Persian and Urdu to run the administration.

Says the celebrated Tyndale Biscoe in his book “Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade” published in London in 1922 about the history of Kashmir in relation to the question of language.

“Kashmir, being one of the most lovely countries of the world, very naturally became the desire of all who visited it, and the poor Kashmiri has been the servant and slave to various dynasties.

“In 1750, it came under the most cruel and worst of all, the rule of Afghans. Those who would not give up their Hinduism for Mohammed were done to death and thousands were tied up in sacks and drowned in the rivers and lakes. In 1819, the Kashmiris called in the aid of Sikhs who drove out the Afghans and ruled with at most as cruel a hand as did the Afghans.

“Again in 1846, the country came under the rule of the Rajputs, for when the British arms conquered the Sikhs, we made over this lively country of Maharajah Gulab Singh, who owned the neighbouring country of Jammu, for the paltry sum of three quarters of a million pounds, to be his and his heirs, as an independent possession. In consideration for this transfer, Gulab Singh was to hand over annually to the British Government one horse, twelve perfect shawl goats and three pairs of shawls, and further was to bring all his troops to join ours when necessary for maintaining order in the territories adjoining his border.

“When Maharajah Gulab Singh died his son, Ranbir Singh, became Maharajah and on his decease his eldest son, Pratab Singh, now Sir Pratab Singh, G.C.S.I., took his seat on the gaddi (throne) in the year 1885. He governs his country with the help of State Council composed of native officials not from Kashmir but from India. Most of them are men

lent by the Indian Government and hold various appointments, such as Public Works, Revenue etc.”

The modern history of Kashmir begins on March 16th 1846 when the Treaty of Amritsar was signed between Rajah Gulab Singh of Jammu and the British Government’s representative, the Viceroy of India. In the history of Kashmir, the Dogra rule was the most peaceful and a great deal of progress was achieved in the exactly 101 years of its rule from 1846 to 1947.

While the founder Maharaja Gulab Singh spent his initial years of rule in consolidating territory, it was his son Ranbir Singh who started reforms to bring Kashmir on par with British India in terms of progress. The Ranbir Polytechnic in Srinagar and the Ranbir Penal code are just two of the instances of the work initiated by him. He was also quite liberal in ordering improvement of transport And communication within the state, which increased mobility and trade.

It was during the rule of his son Maharaja Pratap Singh that Kashmir stepped from the 19th century into the 20th century. Gradually, the modern methods of administration started following British guidelines because the majority of the key officials including the Maharaja’s, Council of Advisors comprised people who were Indians but not natives of Jammu and Kashmir. All of them were nominated by the Government of India on a request from the Maharaja of Kashmir.

The reforms continued by Maharaj Pratap Singh were taken further ahead by his successor Maharaja Hari Singh who ascended the Gaddi in 1925 and ruled the state till October 1947 when he acceded to the Union of India.

With the influx of English officers who comprised initially officers from the Political Department, military experts and others from various other fields, the language used gradually veered round to being English. Most Englishmen did not understand the local language and most Kashmiris did not understand English.

Fortunately, the progressive ruler had already made arrangements to encourage modern education and schools and colleges had been started. However in this field, it was the Christian Missionaries of the Christian Missionary Society (CMS) which was the very first to introduce medical service and relief on an organized scale in the Kashmir valley barely 8 years after the Indian Mutiny. Majority of them were doctors and it was perhaps felt that medical relief would also help in spreading the Christian gospel.

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The First to learn?

The respected teacher known as Shiva Middle was a senior teacher in the Government Run state High School at Bage Dilawar Khan. His real name was Pandit Shivji and his surname was Ghasi. He had passed the 8th standard and as such the word middle was attached to his name. As you must be knowing, in the academic Ladder from 1st to 5th standard was called Primary, from 6th to 8th it was called Middle and 9th to 10th as the High. So any person clearing the 8th standard examination was called Middle pass, which Mr. Shivji Kaul Ghasi had done. It is said that he had also appeared in the 10th standard (Matriculation) examination being held by the university of undivided Panjab but failed to clear it having failed in one of the compulsory subjects viz English.

It is said that he was fond of using big and complicated words, phrases and idioms while answering the question paper. As he did not have complete knowledge of proper usage, he would make wrong usage, which let him down. An example of this often quoted by people was that once while teaching in a class he asked the students to write the meaning of the word “Slow” in English when none of the students could do so. He dictated the meaning to them as “Tardiness of locomotion”. The story goes that Mr. Shiv Kaul Ghasi used to memorise the meaning of simple words of English language by consulting dictionaries and then use the same. Anyway, when I (says N.N.Moza) was in High School during 30s of the last century Mr. Ghasi used to teach History to the High School classes as he remembered all the important events of Indian and English history by heart along with dates.

Contemporary Speaks

Who was the first Kashmiri Pandit to learn English? In the absence of any records, one has to ferret out details as best as one can. English, in an organized form came to the Kashmir valley through the good offices of Rev. Cannon Biscoe who may be called the father of Modern Education in the Kashmir valley. Practically all the leaders of the Kashmiri political movement have studied either under his guidance or in one of the schools started by him.

But coming back to our primary question. I have it on the authority of Col. M.L.Sapru that when he was a primary school student a teacher who was really not a teacher was famous within the community as the first Pandit to learn English.

At the time when Col. Sapru was a young student, he was already in his fifties, which would make him a product of the nineteenth century or the latest early twentieth century.

Anyway, let us give him the benefit of being the pioneer and the torch bearer and the beacon of light that is knowledge which opened the window for Kashmir to the wide world beyond the borders of Pir Panjal.

Mr.N.N.Moza, a learned scholar and former officer of the Jammu and Kashmir Government, has tried to explain the approximate date when Pandit Shiv Kaul Ghasi would have learnt English at school.

“I passed my matriculation examination in 1936 at the age of 16 years and Mr.Ghasi must have been around 46 years of age then. Thus he must have been born about 30 years. According to this my guess for his year of birth must have been round about 1890.

“As for records Mr.Ghasi being the first Pandit to have learnt English, this can't be confirmed. I know of a few persons who were better qualified and probably elder to him. A few examples are given below.

“When I joined the Sericulture Department in 1940 in Srinagar, Tara Chand Wazir was the Director of Sericulture, Jammu Province. He was a postgraduate.

When I was studying in S.P.College from 1936-40, Mr.Ram Chand Pandita was the senior most Professor of English followed by. M.S.Qazi, J.L.Kaul and S.N.Thusu. Even Shankar Pandit Koul, the Head Master of Mission School was a teacher of English and Mr.Tyndale Biscoe is said to have remarked about his ability: “What Shankar does not know is not worth knowing “

In view of this, I am constrained to agree that most likely Shiv Kaul Ghasi was perhaps the first Pandit to have learnt English “

As a post script it may be mentioned that the first batch of graduates passed out of the now renamed college which started out under the name of Sri Pratap Hindu College now named just S.P.College, in 1911. While the exact date can't be pinpointed, it is safe to assume that the college must have started in 1907. In those days, the degree course was of four years duration. Thus the date of the graduation of the first batch in 1911 tallies with the above.

Perhaps the second principal of Sri Pratap College, it can be deduced from above, was Dr.Iqbal Narain Sharga who worked as Principal, Sri Pratap College, Srinagar, for 11 years from 1911 to 1922, after Prof.M.U.Moore, the first Principal left.

The background to the setting up of a private college begins with certain progressive reforms introduced during the rule of Maharaja Pratap Singh who succeeded his father Maharaja Ranbir Singh in 1885. Municipalities were constituted and a college was established at Jammu. Pandit Daya Kishen Kaul – a Kashmiri Pandit from Lahore—who

was the Maharaja's private Secretary, took a keen interest in starting a college at Srinagar with private effort. Till then, very few Kashmiri Pandits had received modern education with the result that with the introduction of English in the Government offices, they found themselves unfit for any positions in the central Administration. With the formation of the State Council, which was wholly manned by people from the neighbouring province of the Punjab, waves of office-hunters from outside moved towards Kashmir.

They got employment in almost every central office. All the important positions came to be occupied by them and even in subordinate offices they found place in large numbers. These outsiders opposed giving higher education to the people of the State. **One of the members of the Council made a proposal that no college should ever be opened in Kashmir, as it would be unwise to impart higher education to the people of a frontier province.**

But one of the members of the Council Raja Suraj Kaul was a Kashmiri. His father had moved down to Lahore in the closing years of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's reign. He and his relations among Kashmiri Pandits, received some encouragement. A good number of outside Kashmiri Pandits were also encouraged to come back. His son, Pandit Daya Kishen Kaul, opened correspondence with Mrs. Annie Besant and persuaded her to open a college here. Soon after a college under the name of Sri Pratap Hindu College was opened at Srinagar. The local Kashmiri Pandit boys joined the college in large numbers.

During all these years, the Muslims were not much in the picture. The policy of the British Government of India was to keep the Muslim peasantry more or less contented but under control. As already stated, a regular land settlement was effected. Their holdings were guaranteed, to them, but little encouragement was given to them in the field of education for fear that they might become conscious of their political rights. Due to the Franco-German war of 1870, the Muslim commercial class was ruined beyond hope. The result was that the leadership of the Muslims went into the hands of obscurantist and reactionary priests who also discouraged their taking to Western education.

Things went on in this manner when a local Maulvi by name Maulana Rasul Shah who was imbued with some progressive ideas, realized that without modern education the Muslims will always remain backward. He founded an association and under its auspices a Muslim secondary school was started. In this, he was greatly helped by some outside Muslims who were in state service.

The teachers' appointed in the beginning were mostly Pandits. But the school soon became a High School, and Muslims began to attend the school in large numbers, but the Pandit boys had gone much ahead of them.

N.N.Moza

Academic Standards

“On the day of the examination, all students of the 5th class from all the primary schools affiliated to the State High School were led to the premises by one of the teachers of every school. At the venue of the examination, the students of all these schools were made to sit in a lawn in rows school-wise. At the stroke of 10, a sedate-looking lean figure with snow-white turban on his head, an immaculately stitched achkan, flawless white chooridar Pyjamas and wearing a deep red shoe (jooti) approached us with measured steps flowing with grace. Our teachers ordered us to stand up as a mark of respect to this sober-looking respectable teacher who was the Superintendent of Examinations. He was one of the senior most teachers of the high school and his name was Shri Ram Chand Dhar. He was famous for his knowledge of mathematics.

First Academic Test

“After directing us to sit down, Shri Dhar asked us to write 10 sentences in English and whoever among us finished the composition should stand up so that he could personally collect the answer – sheets. After all the candidates handed over their answer-sheets to him, there was a break till noon. After this hour, he sat in a chair under a chinär and kept the English textbook on a table near him. We were called one by one school-wise and asked to read from the textbook a para or two here and there and explain the meaning thereof. Thus passed off the first day of our primary examination, the first test of our academic career.

“On the second day, we had to sit on the same lawn as on the first. The superintendent dictated a few questions from the prescribed mathematics textbook. After solving the problems, the answer-sheets were handed over as on the previous day. In the afternoon, the Urdu, Hindi and other teachers of the school tested our knowledge of the respective subjects. The marks awarded in these subjects by them were handed over to him. It took a few days to compile the results, which were communicated to the concerned primary schools for announcement. Thus I was lucky in having passed the first academic test of my life, which would enable me to join a middle school for further studies. Later these three classes viz: 1st Middle (6^h standard), 2nd Middle (7th) and 3rd Middle (8th) also existed in the State High School. So I was admitted to this school to avoid frequent changes of schools, I continued to study in this school till I passed the matriculation examination held by the University of Punjab to which all the educational institutions of our state were affiliated. This university of undivided Punjab was situated at Lahore before the independence of India and the year was 1936.

“The State High School, situated in a mini-island called Bagh Dilawar Khan, had quite a vast area to house the school buildings, parks, huge chinärs and a playground, all surrounded by the back-waters of the Dal Lake. The whole area was divided into two parts, one comprising the inner and the other outer premises. There was gate in between through which only the members of the staff were allowed to pass to the inner premises before the opening time of the school indicated by the ringing of a bell. The students

would thus throng the outer premises till the bell rang.”

N.N.Moza, Koshur Samachar, February 2001.

Batta Angreez

In most communities in India with a distinct linguistic identity, people from those areas talk in their mother tongue or dialect when meeting and talking with others from their own group. Originally, before the onset of the English language, most Indians spoke their mother tongue but whenever a foreign tongue was imposed on us especially after a particular foreign rule got stabilized speaking the foreigners' tongue became a matter of prestige. Learning of Persian and Urdu ensured a job during the Mughal time.

For Kashmiri Pandits learning the language of the rulers was a matter of survival. With innate intelligence and habitual hard work, Kashmiri Pandits became quite adept at getting jobs. After the demise of the Mughal Empire, Urdu was still used as Court language even during Maharaja Ranjit Singh's time. When Kashmir became a part of the Sikh Empire Urdu was still used.

It was in 1846 that unknown to many including the Kashmiri Pandits that a new era started with the Dogra Raj being set up in a composite new entity called Jammu and Kashmir. While the correspondence and transactions were still carried out in Urdu, the higher levels of Administration gradually switched to English.

Kashmiri Pandits discovered that British Rule albeit indirect had come to stay and therefore Urdu and Persian were not so important although most people retained Urdu and switched over to English with a vengeance.

This coincided with the arrival of missionaries in the valley and the efforts of the princely Government to introduce the English language in both the school and the college level. Teachers were brought from outside Kashmir and within one generation the valley had a fairly large number of Kashmiri Pandit teachers.

Within the social milieu and the pecking order, now learning of English became a prestigious undertaking. A 16 year old boy's worth was assessed by

a) by his handwriting, b) spellings, c) comprehension, d) ability to speak English grammatically. Quite often boys preparing for interview would be tested by family friends, relatives and elders already working for the Government on the above parameters to determine their chances of getting a job. Quite often the area of employment was only clerical and more and more the correspondence was in English and hence the stress on the language.

Added to this was the new machine called typewriter and the contribution of Mr. Pitman known as Shorthand. Many rushed to a newly started institute by a Kashmiri Pandit to

learn typing and shorthand. Many more, prior, to this went to far away places as Calcutta, Allahabad, Lucknow but most of them rushed to Lahore to learn the new skill.

A curious feature of this development was that Kashmiri Pandits began using English words at home so that after just one generation even their illiterate mothers knew a few words of English. If it had stopped at that, it would have been normal, but what happened and can even now be seen in action is as follows:

When two of them meet it begins something like this

“Namaskar Mahara. Warei Aswaye.

“Namaskar Mahara Aahan Mahara Orzoo

“Makhan lalin Kaem Mahara Karim. I have done Makhanlal’s work.

“Sahibus Wonum ki bi haekene karit. I have told the Sahib that

I can’t do it. “

Once Srinagar experienced its regular bout of floods and the low-lying areas inundated. Water had started seeping into the courtyards of houses in Sathu Barbar Shah Area. The menfolk were awake at night watching anxiously the water level.

“Hey water level Mahara che khasan

“Ye Mahara wate jald danger mark

“Acha Teli we shall abandon the house “

This habit of interspersing English sentences, words, and phrases, into the conversations has now become an accepted mode of dialogue more so after many Kashmiri Pandits migrated to the plains from 1947 onwards. They either speak in Hindi or English now with broken words, phrases of Kashmiri.

Battangreez “Ye Machra Che Penin Penin Poyshan Asan”

This sentence explains how desperately semi literates in the community tried to speak English. What he meant was that it was an individual position which mattered.

“ Give me some peoples and I will arrest him himself “ This was a mixture of bravado and a desperate attempt to show familiarity with the English language. What he meant was that given a few people under his command he could effect the arrest of the guilty party.”

“Have Cup Tea Mahara”

The man was a highly experienced Electrical Engineer and one day he wanted to buy and present his boss a Kashmiri teacozy. It was too far to go to the shop. So he decided to take a short cut and telephoned the Manager of the shop enquiring whether they stocked teacozyies.

Yes, the manager said we have teacozyies in stock. So the engineer said why don't you have a cup of tea with me, meaning thereby that the manager should come to his house along with teacozy and delivery it him. For this, he would get a cup of tea.

One can see how English has got ingrained into Indian languages and despite all the noise made by language fanatics it will remain so. Language is a live entity and it continuously gives and takes words from other languages.

So our hero said these immortal words to convey his request. “Have cup tea mahara”. One will see that the first three words are English and only the last word is Kashmiri indicating respect.

“Angrezi Bachao”. (Save English) Otherwise, what would we do?

Gold from the dust

There was this prosperous businessman, one of the few Pandits to be in business. He decided to send his son to one of the best engineering colleges in the country. Unfortunately he did not get admission as his marks were not upto the mark.

He came back disappointed. His father was furious and determined that his son would get his engineering degree whatever it cost him. The son applied and got admission in USA and went there, completed his degree and eventually returned home after a number of years.

After the initial welcome, the son found it difficult to adjust and was complaining always about the dust and dirt of India and comparing it with the cleanliness of USA. The rest of the family heard this in silence but after sometime they could not bear it any more.

One day one of them hit back at him, (the USA returned man) and said these priceless words:

“Out of this dust came the money that paid for your education in USA”

10

Pandits & The Steel Frame

Despite their habit of understatement, the British were proud of their Civil Service in India, which they called the Indian Civil Service. The objectives of the service were two-fold, one to maintain Law and Order and the other collection of land revenue, the main source of income. They called it the steel frame, in the firm grip of which they held the Indian Empire.

During British rule all over India, most of the Brahmins and Kayasths made a change over from Urdu and Persian, which were in use during the Mughal rule, to English. Roughly from 1757 the English language began to spread initially in Bengal and Madras Presidencies followed by Bombay. The three Presidencies were in fact the foundation of British trade and rule in India.

The Kashmiri Pandit community fleeing from persecution in their native land also switched over from Persian to English. The time gap between introduction of English in places like Delhi and Lahore as also Lucknow and Allahabad and the Kashmir Valley was roughly about 50 years. While the first Kashmiri Pandit graduate of Delhi College passed out in the mid 19th century, the first graduates passed out of the S.P.College Srinagar (Affiliated to the Punjab University) in 1911.

Consequently, the Pandits who had migrated from the Valley due to persecution learnt English first. In fact, the Purana Kashmiri as they were nicknamed as compared to the Taza (The Valley Kashmiri Pandits), had the opportunity to try for the Civil Services both at the lower and the middle level. Although the ICS was opened to Indians from 1865 when Rabindra Nath Tagore's brother became the first Indian ICS Officer, very few Indians qualified for the service. For Kashmiri Pandits also, the service was open and if one compares the numbers one is astounded.

Most of the areas for which Pandits qualified themselves were education, teaching, law, administration, revenue, literature etc., but most of them were traditionally inclined to Government Service. Even the few who became doctors and engineers joined government service. A very small number were into business that remains so even today.

Geography has a vital role to play in the lives of people. The two roads, which gave access to the valley, were the B.C.Road and J.V.Road. While the B.C.Road was snow bound for almost six months in a year, the J.V.Road was fortunately kept open for almost the whole year. It connected Srinagar with Rawalpindi via the Kohala Bridge, while the B.C.Road connected to Jammu. To provide more access to the rest of India from Kashmir, the Maharaja of Kashmir financed the extension of a rail link from Sialkot in Punjab to Jammu, which enabled people both for business and travel to reach places in Punjab and beyond.

Rail to Srinagar

Although imperial Britain always used the time honoured pretense of having the welfare of people at heart (as do our present day politicians), they did not want the rail link to Srinagar from Jammu via the Banihal route to be constructed. What they wanted was that the rail line should be via Kohala practically parallel to the Jhelam Valley Road. Maharaja Pratap Singh wanted to link the two important parts of his state for better interaction. But the British would not have it, as it did not come within the orbit of defence of the Northwest, which bordered Russia. At that time "The great game" was in full swing. This happened 115 years ago. We are still waiting for the rail. What the British did not let us have, even our own people have not given. The following narrative will illustrate.

“Not many people in the country know that 100 years ago during the reign of Maharaja Ranbir Singh a scheme was prepared by the Jammu and Kashmir Government to link Jammu and Srinagar by rail. But the scheme had to be given up when the British Government, owing to strategic reasons, insisted on an alternative proposal which was not acceptable to the Maharaja.

“Mr.Mansa Ram Chanchal, a Dogri researcher, has disclosed that four surveys were under taken in this connection by Maj-Gen D.E.Bourbel in 1883-86. A railway engineer, Mr.J.A. Anderson, gave the final touches to the surveys and presented his reports which proposed four routes via Banihal, Poonch, Pir Panial and Abbotabad.

The Banihal route envisaged the railway line to begin from Jammu Tawi, which was linked with Sialkot before the partition of the country. This railway was to go via the Chenab Valley to Srinagar. The proposed stations were Akhnoor, Reasi, Ramban, Banihal, Anantnag, Beejbehara and Srinagar.

An eight-mile tunnel through the Pir Panjal range was to protect the railway line from snowfall. As the tunneling involved heavy expenditure, it was alternatively proposed to cover the track with sheds. An expenditure of Rs.3.71 crore was estimated.

The Poonch route was to begin from Gujrat in West Punjab and go to Srinagar via Mirpur, Chaumukh, Kotli and Baramula. This route also involved the construction of a 42.240-foot tunnel. The 284-mile line was to be completed in 18 years.

The third route was from the north-western station of Madura via Muzaffarabad. Its length was 210 miles (78 miles in British India and 132 miles in Jammu and Kashmir). The estimated expenditure was Rs.2.21 crore.

Starting from Kalka Sarai station, the fourth route was to reach Srinagar via the upper Jhelum valley. This was envisaged to be completed in 13 years at an estimated cost of Rs.2.30 crore.

General Bourbel also suggested the fares to be charged from the passengers traveling by different classes. The fare for Class III was 5 paise per mile. It was 15 paise per mile for Class II and 33 paise per mile for Class I.

The Maharaja preferred the Banihal route because it would have linked the two State capitals, benefited a large population and would have made the State's produce to reach the markets outside Jammu and Kashmir easily.

But the British Government insisted that the route via Mozaffarabad should be constructed to provide strategic advantage for the security of the North Western Frontier Province. The transportation of troops and arms and ammunition would also become easier.

Several rounds of talks between the two Governments could not make headway and the proposal was finally given up.

Indian Express, D.N.Chaturvedi, 08.10.78

“A railroad is contemplated into the valley and is to be completed in five years according to good authority, but one is disposed to be skeptical of this unless the Government of India has determined to make the line in order to obtain the control of affairs on the frontier of Cashmere, a very difficult matter now.

“ The opening of a railroad into the vale of Cashmere would certainly facilitate the movement of troops from India, but for a time might cause some mischief, for the people here depend entirely on the crops they can produce, but owing to the lax system of government which has so long prevailed, they have no resources of their own so that export of their rice and other grains might at first be a very serious loss to them, though if famine recurs, food from Punjab would be easily brought.”

The Times of India, 6, 1886.

When the first forced migration from Kashmir took place, most Pandits came to Lahore and from here gradually spread out to places like Lucknow, Agra, Faizabad, Allahabad, Aligarh, Meerut in the old United Provinces. As can be seen from an old map of British India, there were many Princely states in North India. In the Rajputana area, there were Princely states like Jaipur, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Bikaner ect., Quite a few Kashmiri Pandits went into the service of these Princes and some of them rose to high positions of power and standing.

The pinnacle of ambition was to join ICS, but everybody could not make it as for a long time one had to go to England to take the examination. Even after the examinations were held in India, the number overall from all over India, including the Princely states, was a fraction of the number of British candidates selected. The group that scored the highest among the Indians were the Bengalees followed by Kashmiri Pandits and Tamils.

The provincial civil services in U.P and Punjab as also Rajputana were the areas where the Pandits were mostly employed. Quite a few adventurous ones ventured as far away as Calcutta and Hyderabad. In Calcutta, the first Indian to become a High Court Judge was Justice Shambu Nath Pandit who a Kashmiri Pandit.

Before 1947, seven Kashmiri Pandits qualified for the ICS, which after 1947 became IAS, two for the Indian Police (which later became Imperial Police Service) In addition to the ICS, the Pandits also qualified for other allied services. Three qualified for Indian Railways, several for the Finance Department and the Law Department in the non-ICS category. It is interesting that only 30 years after the first batch of graduates came out of S.P.College, Srinagar, the first Pandit from the Valley qualified for the IFS.

He was Pandit Trilokinath Kaul who distinguished himself as a diplomat being ambassador to United States and Russia. R.N.Kao proved himself a capable brilliant Police Officer who was the founder director of RAW (Research and Analysis Wing) India's first external intelligence agency. Senior to him in the same service was G.K.Handoo who was Pandit Nehru's first and only security officer when personal security of important leaders had started becoming important.

Although the number of distinguished civil servants from the community is very long, one can mention B.K.Nehru also ambassador to U.S.A, P.N.Haksar, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, P.N.Dhar well known economist, R.K.Nehru, Secretary General, External Affairs Minister and many others. (The last three were not from the ICS).

For the small number of Pandits, in all about twenty thousand in the rest of India, the number who qualified and served in Government services was indeed quite high, a matter of pride for the community. There were other distinguished sons and daughters of the community who achieved fame and recognition in diverse fields as law (the community has produced a number of high court and supreme court judges including one chief justice of the Supreme Court of India) medicine, engineering, agriculture, applied science, industries etc.,

DR. S.S. Nehru

“Great interest is being taken in the visit of Dr. S.S. Nehru, who is to expound in his theory of converting a human, animal or plant body into an accumulator of curative energy. Three outstanding advantages are claimed for the method – that it is extremely simple, that is the results are very speedy and that the cost is negligible.

Dr. Nehru is to demonstrate to the British farmer ways of improving his stock and doubling or trebling the quantity and quality of his crops for a purely nominal cost and at a minimum of trouble. He has already been to Japan and to America, expounding his theories of electro-culture.

Here is Dr. Nehru's own story of how he came to start his research work and achieve discoveries.

“In 1919 I was Under Secretary of Agriculture, United Provinces and that responsibility brought me face to face with the Indian farmer's sorrowful plight. Take, now, the case of sugar. Our people were absolutely lost in the open market because they could not raise sugar at a price. For hope, I turned to research in the science of physics, which I had studied in some of the world most famous institutions.

“By encircling an ordinary strawberry plant with a single mesh of wire netting, I got the effect of encircling it with a horseshoe magnet. Within a short time this plant was activated into a brighter appearance, a more vigorous growth. Next, I repeated the same experiment substituting a radio aerial for the magnet. The result was identical providing that electricity could affect plant development. TREATMENT OF PLANTS.

As a result of this discovery Dr. Nehru worked out exact methods for treating plants through electro-culture.

The first is the radio-magnetic system. This involves nothing more than burying a piece of half inch mesh wire netting in the seed bed for plants and trees A sleeve is formed from such netting and slipped over the trunk or the branches.

The second method involves electrifying the seed before sowing either spreading it out in a thin layer on an insulated metal plate and giving it a charge of say 2,000 volts for one minute, or by soaking the seed in ionized water in an insulated vessel for from one to two hours.

The third method is by irrigating the plant with ionized water. Another is intercultural of the growing plant with other suitable plant rich in ultra-violet rays, like onions and other root crops. And the last is by a combination of these methods. Thousands of gallons of water can be electrified in a few moments by the ignition circuit of a motorcar.

The Pioneer, August 8, 1936

(Dr. Nehru was the first Kashmiri Pandit to qualify for the ICS).

List of ICS, IP, other Civil Service Departments of the Government of India.

Atal, Jai Kumar, ICS, (asst.Commr., C.P.) (B19th Jan. 1914) – Educ. At Clayesmore Sch., Winchester and Balliol Coll., Oxford; joined the service, 16th Sept., 1937; arrived in India , Nov., 1937, and served in the C.P as asst.commr.; under sec., Jan.1942.

Dar, Shyam Sunder Lal, Member Board of Revenue, U.P

Handoo, Gopi Krishna, M.B.E., Indian Police (supt. United Provs.) (b.24th Mar. 1905) – joined the service as dep. Supt. Of police , 29th Dec., 1927; confd., Apl.1933; supt. Of police (confd.) Feb.,1944. Security Officer to Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru.

Kaul, Diwan Bahadur Sir Daya Kishan, K.B.E., Dec.30, 1919; C.I.E, June 26, 1908.(**Served as Prime Minister of Patiala State, among others**)

Kaul, Rai Bahadur, Hari Kishan, Divisonal Commissinor, **Prime Minister of**

J &K, 1931-32.

Kaula, Sir Gangaram, Kt.,C.I.E.,B.A., late India Finance Dept. (b May 9, 1877) – Retd., Oct., 1932.

Kaul, Brahma Kumar, ICS, (asst.mag.and collr.) (b.Nov.11,1917)-educ. At Allahabad Univ.; apptd.on probn. After exam of 1940 and served in United Provs.as asst.mag.and collr.

Kaul,K.N.,Income-tax dept. – Apptd. Under sec.,govt.of India, fin.dept., Feb.,1945; dep.sec., ditto,Nov.1945.

Kaul,Madan Gopal, ICS, (b.Jan 16, 1921) – Educ. At Allahabad Univ.; apptd.on probn.after exam. Of 1943, and served in Bengal.

Kaul, M.K.,Indian State rlys., (b.May 12, 1905) – Dep.contr. of stores, B.B. & C.I.rly., Aug. 1945. Kaul, Maheshwar Nath, M.A. (Cantab.), Barr (b.Sept. 16, 1901) – Apptd.dep.secty., Legisl.assembly dept., Sept.1937.

Kaul, Parduman Kishan, B.A., LL.B., Rai Bahadur, (b.Jan, 23, 1890) –joined the [serv.as](#) Munsif, May 24, 1919 confd., May, 1921; civil and sess. Judge, (confd.) Jul., 1935; dist. And sess. Judge (confd.) Jan., 1943; addl.judge, Oudh ch.court, Dec., 1944; judge, ch.ct., June, 1946.

Kaul, Pradyuma Krashna, B.A.,Indian C.S. (addtl.judge, ch.ct., Oudh) (b.Jan.14, 1900) Educ.at Punjab Univ. and Queen’s Coll., Cambridge; joined the service, Oct.15, 1923; arrived, Dec. 10, 1923 and served in the Punjab as asst.commr; dep.commr. (subs.provl), Apr.1931; confd., March, 1935.

Kaul, Triloki Nath, B.A.,LL.B.,Indian C.S. (asst.mag.and collr.,U.P) (B Dec.27, 1912) – Educ. At S.P.High School, Srinagar, Kashmir, Punjab Univ., Allahabad Univ., and King’s College, London; joined the service, Sept. 15, 1937; arrived in India, Nov.,1937, and served in U.P as asst.mag. and collr.; group testing offcr.,civil [select.bd.](#), govt. of India , Oct., 1945. **Joined Indian Foreign Service, served as Indian ambassador to U.S.S.R and U.S.A, retired as Foreign Secretary, Government of India.**

Kao, Rameshwar Nath, Indian Police (United Provs.) (b.May 10, 1918) – Apptd. Asst.supt.,on probn.,March,1940. **After independence, headed foreign operations of Intelligence Bureau. Founded the Research & Analysis Wing (RAW), India’s first external Intelligence Agency, retired 1977, Security Adviser to Prime Minister till 1984.**

Nehru,S.S, Dr, ICS retired as **Member, Board of Revenue, U.P**

Nehru, R.K, ICS, **Secretary General, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.**

Nehru, B.K., ICS, Jan 1, 1945, **Indian amabassador to U.S.A.**

Sapru, Anand Narayan, ICS. (educn.Sec. to Govt.,United Provs) (b.March 31, 1901) – Educ at Allahabad Univ. and Balliol coll., Oxford; joined the service, Oct.24, 1924; arrived, 23rd Dec., 1924 and served in the United Provs, **senior member Board of Revenue, U.P.**

Sapru, Sir Tej., Bahadur, P.C.,K.C.S.I.,LL.D. **Law Member of Governor General’s Executive Council, 1920**

Wattal, Pyare Kishan, C.I.E, M.A,Indian Finance Dept. (b.10th May 1890) – Joined the service, 9th May, 1912; asst.acctnt-genl., Nov.1912; dep.ditto.,Apr.,1924; examr., ouside audit, Bombay, Nov., 1924; services placed at disposal of Kashmir durbar, June 11, 1926; dep.acctnt.genl. (civil), Punjab, Nov., 1932; ditto (works), Oct.,1933; offg.acct.genl.,Central Provs., Apr., 1935; ditto, Madras, March, 1936; [confd.as](#) acct.genl., Punjab, Sept., 1939; confd.,acct.genl. (cl.I), Nov., 1941; C.I.E., June, 1944.

Wanchoo, Kailash Nath, ICS, **retired as Chief Justice of India.**

Wanchoo,N.N, ICS,

(From Civil List of the Government of India, 1946).

Judges, Lawyers and Dewans

With a favourable opinion formed by the British about the Kashmiri Pandits, it was but natural that the former should have extended their unstinted support to them. The Pandits’ knowledge of Persian and Urdu was of a very high order and they had taken to the study of English language much earlier than many others. With the reorganization of courts, they came to be appointed in subordinate Judiciary and many amongst them entered the legal profession, from its very start and were among the first Indians to be appointed to the highest posts in the judiciary.

Mr. Justice Shambu Nath whose father Sada Sheo had migrated from Kashmir in the closing years of the 18th century was born in Calcutta in the year 1820 A.D. and was appointed as a Judge of the High Court of Calcutta in 1862 A.D. He was the first Indian to be appointed Judge of a High Court. So also was another Kashmiri Pandit Mr. Justice Ram Narain Dar who was the first Indian to be appointed a Judge of the Punjab Chief Court. In United Provinces, where the Kashmiri Pandits had settled in large numbers, the leadership at the Bar was for years held by them.

To name just a few, we might refer to the Honorable Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Pandit Kailas Nath Katju, Pandit Janki Nath Chak and lastly the great Pandit Moti Lal Nehru. All these gentleman were great nation-builders and took a very prominent part in building the National movement. In the Punjab, Pandit Sheonarayan Shamim retained the leadership of the Bar for a number of decades. He was a great poet, a great social reformer, a great student of music and a great Buddhist scholar to which faith he held allegiance. Even in recent times, there has been a galaxy of eminent Kashmiri Pandit Judges such as Mr. Justice K.N. Wanchoo, Mr. Justice S.K. Dar, Mr. Justice Kichlu, Mr. Justice P.N. Sapru, Mr. Justice T.N. Mulla, Mr. Justice A.N. Mulla Mr. Justice P.K. Kaul Mr. Justice R.K. Kaul etc.,

A Record Breaking Run

*He started out as a junior lawyer at the district court in Faizabad. It was hard work, but he did it cheerfully and over the next twenty years built up a roaring practice. Many a time, he was persuaded by his friends and relatives to move over his practice from a district town to the city of Allahabad where the High Court was located which is today the largest high court in the whole world. But Pandit Manohar Nath Sapru, the lawyer in question, declined. Eventually, he completed fifty years of non stop practice at the Faizabad District Court at which point the honourable judges of the High Court at Allahabad decided along with the members of the Faizabad Bar to honour Sapru and honour him, they did. **This was a record at that time** (1927). He was also a member of the U.P Provincial assembly.*

It would not serve any useful purpose to multiply names excepting for the purpose of showing the extent of official rise of this community. In the Punjab, Raja Narendra Nath and Raja Hari Kishen Kaul retired as commissioners. Raja Narendra Nath was a great landowner and a grandson of Adjutant General Diwan Ajudhia Prashad. He took part in politics after his retirement and was elected to the Punjab Legislative Assembly and was appointed as a Minister. Raja Hari Kishen Kaul was appointed as Chief Minister of the Jammu and Kashmir state at a very troublesome period of its history.

Sir Ganga Ram Kaula, Pandit Brij Lal Nehru, rose very high in the Audit and Accounts Departments. Sir Ganga Ram is a direct descendant of Prabha Kaul who was wrapped in a mat and thrown into the Dal Lake to be drowned there along with a number of Pandits under orders of Mir Hazar Khan, the Afghan Subedar in 1792 A.D but he was saved and fled to India. After having reached the highest rung in the official ladder Sir Ganga retired, and was afterwards appointed the Chief Minister of Jind State where he served as

such for about eleven years. Pandit Manmohan Nath Kaul whose services were lent to Kashmir Durbar was appointed Governor of Kashmir. Apart from the settlement work,

How a PM escaped Maharaja Bhupendra Singh of Patiala was known for his intelligence, statesmanship, diplomacy and political wisdom. But Raja Sir Daya Kishen Kaul, his Prime Minister proved to be so much more clever that the ruler danced to his tune. During British rule in India, rulers of major states had magisterial powers, and those with whom the ruler was annoyed were arrested and sent to jail without trial. A day came when the Maharaja was so much annoyed with the Prime Minister that he said openly in the presence of his ADCs and some other top officers that the Premier should be arrested the next day. Sardar Sahib Deohri Mualla, officer in charge of the royal household, was also present. As soon as an officer, Kishen Singh, could get away from the palace, he reached the Prime Minister's house and told him what had transpired at the palace. The Premier kept his cool. "Don't worry, Sardar Sahib. Go home and sleep peacefully", he said.

After Kishen Singh had gone, he sent a man to the railway station to reserve a first class coupe in the mail train, which arrived from Bathinda around midnight. He then rang up the station master and told him that he was going to Lahore on a secret mission and did not want anyone to see him at the railway station. He asked the railway official to see to it that the train stopped at level-crossing number 21, just two minutes drive from his house. That was easily arranged. After the Prime Minister entered his compartment, he bolted it from inside and was safe, as the state police could not arrest anyone from a train or a railway station even in state territory. When policemen went to his house the next day to arrest him, they could not find him there. He had reached Lahore by that time

His Highness knew that Kishen Singh was a bosom friend of the Prime Minister and he must have informed him about his impending arrest. The Maharaja asked Kishen Singh but he denied even when the ruler threatened that he would be arrested and sent to jail. Kishen Singh was arrested and sent to prison, where he passed 13 or 14 years of his life and was released only after the death of the Maharaja. Raja Daya Kishen had good contacts with the Political Department; so it was not easy to get him extradited from what was known as Angrezi Illaqa. The Maharaja also knew that even if he had the Prime Minister arrested, the Political Department was sure to intervene to set him free. At the most, his arrest would have disparaged his image, and his remaining in jail for a few days or weeks would have caused him great inconvenience. The quick wit of the Kashmiri Pandit saved him from all that. In fact, it proved a blessing in disguise for the Maharaja as the future events showed. Not long after the escape of the Prime Minister and his dismissal from state service, the Government of India, which had been receiving complaints against the ruler – some of which were of a very serious nature – decided to have an enquiry by the then Agent to the Governor-General for the Punjab States, Sir Wilberforce Bell.

The enquiry was held at Dalhousie and came to be known as the Dalhousie Enquiry. The Maharaja badly needed the help of his former Prime Minister, as most of the charges

related to the period when Raja Daya Kishen Kaul was the Prime Minister. Emissaries were at once sent to Lahore to bring the former Premier to Patiala.

It was said that the Maharaja placed his turban at the feet of the man whom he was going to arrest and beseeched that it lay in his hands either to see him on the throne or be ruined. The Raja Daya Kishen Kaul took responsibility for several serious charges, for a consideration. In consequence, he was debarred from holding any office in any state in the future and the Maharaja was exonerated.

R.S. Dutta.

which was achieved under his supervision in 1901 A.D. He was a great social reformer. It was he who introduced modern ways of living in the local Pandit population.

There is hardly a state in India where at one time or the other a Kashmiri Pandit was not appointed as a Dewan. For instance, Sir Daya Kishen Kaul was the Chief Minister of Patiala State, Sir Sukhdev Prashad Kak, Dewan of Jodhpur, Dharam Narayan Haksar, Diwan of Sailana State, Pandit Ram Chandra Kak Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir State, Pandit Brij Mohan Nath Zutshi Dewan of Ratlam State, Pandit Maharaja Narain Sheopuri, Dewan of Datia State etc. there were other Pandits who were appointed as Ministers in many states, such as, Pandits Col.Sir Kailas Narayan Haksar (Gwalior), P.K.Wattal, (Kashmir), Radha Krishen Kaul (Kashmir), Diwan Gyan Nath administrator at Nabha, Tribhuwan Nath Sopori (Udaipur), Amar Nath Atal (Jaipur), Narendra Nath Kaul (Kashmir) etc.

History of Kashmiri Pandits, Jia Lal Kilam, 1955

First in

Dr.S.S.Nehru : First Pandit to qualify and join the ICS, 1913

T.N.Kaul : Last one to join ICS, 1937

K.P.Kichlu : First Indian Director of Public Instruction, U.P.

B.N.Dar : First Pandit to go to England for higher studies, (Bar at Law). Elected as a President of the Indian National Congress at Calcutta session in 1911

M.L.Munshi : Makhan Lal Munshi was the first Pandit to become a Paratrooper in the army in the fifties. Joined the army in Nov.1953 in the ranks and retired after completing his colour service.

Pt.Parmanand : First Pandit to become the Accounted General of J & K from 1944 to 48 during Maharaja Hari Singh's rule.

F/O. K.N.Kak : First to bag the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) as a combat pilot in the Indian Air Force during World War II.

Major P.L.Atal : First to join the army as an officer during World War I. Killed in action in Nov.1914 in France. Belonged to Army Medical Corps.

Gen.T.N.Raina : First to bag the Maha Vir Chakra (MVC) during the War with China in 1962 in Ladakh when he was a Brigadier.First Pandit to become Chief of Army Staff.

Capt.M.N.Mulla : First Pandit in the Indian Navy to be awarded Mahavir Chakara posthumously in the 1971 War with Pakistan.

A.C.M S.K.KAUL: First to be awarded Maha Vir Chakra (MVC) in the Bangladesh war in 1971. He was then a Wing Commander of a combat Air Squadron.First Pandit to become Chief of Air Staff.

Mirza Mohan Lal Zutshi (Kashmiri) : First Pandit to learn English at Delhi college, which he joined in 1829, and left in 1831.

Raja Dina Nath : Dewan Raja Dina Nath Finance Minister of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, invested with title of Raja, Nov.26,1846

Radha Kishen Sapru : one of the first batch of English educated Pandits of the Delhi college and Deputy Collector in 1857.

Dr.Bhushan Lal Kaul : First Pandit to be awarded D.Litt by Kashmir University, 2002.

Justice Shambu Nath Pandit : First Indian and first Kashmiri Pandit appointed as a Judge of the Calcutta High Court in 1861. In Nov.2002, The Government of West Bengal unveiled his statue in front of the Shambu Nath Hospital which was built in his memory after his death.

Rama Narain Dar : First Indian appointed as Judge of Punjab Chief Court, 1885.

Tara Chand Wazir : First to take a ride in an aeroplane in 1925. He was then Director of Sericulture J & K Government.

Sukh Devo Prasad Kak : Prime Minister Jodhpur State.

Kishen Lal Atal : Minister Jaipur State.

Ajudhia Nath Kunzru : He was the first to be associated with the freedom movement and was largely responsible for organizing and holding the fourth session of Indian National Congress at Allahabad on Dec.26, 1888 , despite strong opposition from the British.

Bishan Narain Dar: Bar at Law, first Pandit to become President of the Indian National Congress, at Calcutta , 1911.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru : First Indian to become Law Minister of Government of India, 1920, first Indian to get D.C.L (Doctor of Civil Laws)

Gilgit Agency : Started in July 1877.

C.M.S : First team came to Kashmir 1866-67

Postal Service : via Banihall (B.C.Road) & Murree (J.V.Road) set up in 1866.

Kohala Bridge over Jhelum built in 1870, connecting Murree with Srinagar.

Telegraph line connecting Murree Military Head Quarters(Northern Command) with Srinagar extended to Gilgit.

Post and Telegraph, Offices in entire J & K state taken over by British Indian Government in 1894 and 1896.

Six sessions of the Indian National Congress were held under the President ships of Kashmiri Pandits. Namely 27th, 35th, 44th, 45th, 50th, 51st. They were Pandits B.N.Dar, M.L.Nehru & J.L.Nehru.

Widow Marriage : First Widow marriage in 1927.

First School to have trained five thousand boys to swim under the guidance of Tyndale Biscoe at C.M.S.School , Fateh Kadal.

Dr. Elizabeth Newmen – she was the first lady doctor to come to Kashmir.

Oasis of Peace and Progress

From 1338, when Islam made its entry into Kashmir to 1846 when Dogra rule was established, unrest, disorder and chaos were the order of the day with just one silver lining and that was the 50 year rule of **Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin** who was a tolerant and wise ruler. Rulers, Governors and Subedars came and went, many killing, betraying and usurping each other's seat of power. But in one area of activity they were one, and steadfast in their persecution and forcible conversion of Hindus to Islam. It may seem strange, but till 1858, it was only a private company, namely, the East India that ruled India. **The official rule of the British Government in India started in 1858 and ended in 1947 a period of 89 years, whereas the Dogra dynasty lasted from 1846 to 1947 a period of 101 years.**

The 101 years comprised 11 years of the founder Gulab Singh followed by his son Ranbir Singh for 28 years. He was succeeded by Pratap Singh who ruled for 40 years and Hari Singh who ruled for 22 years. Maharaja Gulab Singh spent the early part of his life in Ranjit Singh's army. After he took over the state, he consolidated the boundaries of his kingdom, his priority being to secure the borders and ensure that peace prevailed. He ruled for 11 years. He was succeeded by Ranbir Singh during whose 28 years rule new measures and reforms were introduced such as the Ranbir Penal Code and Ranbir Polytechnic. His work was carried forward after his death by his son Pratap Singh.

During his 40 years long rule, Kashmir actually came out of the medieval backward, ignorant stage into the 20th century. In fact, his rule straddled the 19th and the 20th century. Education, public health, medical facilities, conservancy, town planning, road building, transport, communications such as telegraph, telephone and postal services were introduced and run efficiently. Maharaja Hari Singh who followed him, continued the process until 1947 when Jammu & Kashmir acceded to the Indian Union.

101 years of Dogra rule

Gulab Singh ,	1846-1857	11 years
Ranbir Singh,	1857-1885	28 years
Pratap Singh,	1885-1925	<u>40 years</u>
Hari Singh	1925-1947	22 years

11 Limb Of Law

Lawther Shahi

In July 1931, there were communal riots in Kashmir. Maharaja Hari Singh had ascended the gaddi in 1925. So, only after six years of ruling the state, he faced the most severe test to his rule. He was an extremely progressive ruler to whom history has been very unkind. The twenties were a period, when modernization of administration had started making great strides in the valley. This was the next stage to build up from the valuable contribution made by British missionaries both education wise and public health wise. No one can forget the Neve brothers and Biscoe Sahib. He gave the community the tools with which to face the modern age; along with him were Hadow and earlier to him was Sir. Auriel Stein, the famous explorer. In the second and third decade, we had Sir Peter Clutterbuck who was the Chief Conservator of Forest. Maharaja Hari Singh inherited the state from his uncle Pratap Singh. He had to move carefully keeping in view the problems faced by Pratap Singh who had to undergo severe persecution by the British who needed it as a pretext to annexe the state to British India.

It is well known that in 1931, the small feudatories of Poonch, Mirpur, Rajauri and Riasi were already getting ready to revolt, egged on by the Punjab Muslim League directly and the British indirectly. It was at this point that Hari Singh's mother went to Lahore and met Raja Hari Krishen Kaul and requested him to come to Kashmir as Prime Minister and restore order and save her son. Hari Kishen Kaul agreed and arrived in Jammu from Sialkot along with a very capable police officer Jeevan Lal Muttoo who became his personal aide.

Until 1931, the Police in the state was headed by nominated people chosen by the palace/durbar. It was Hari Kishen Kaul who insisted on bringing an officer of his choice to handle the insurrection. The man whom he chose was B.C.A. Lawther who belonged to the Indian Police, NWFP cadre. He was a unique officer who believed in having proper appreciation of the natives. He hated the imperial haughtiness of the British Officer who took the White Man's burden too seriously. His work in NWFP was superb and mainly dealt with intelligence and he retired as DIG, CID of the province. He could speak Urdu and Pushtu fluently like a native.

On sensitive assignments, he would dress like a Pathan with a suitable haircut and would easily mingle with the natives to pursue his investigation. He was responsible for rescuing the wife of a British Deputy Commissioner of Peshawar district who had been kidnapped by hostile tribesmen. By a strange quirk of fate, Lawther was at this time on leave in England. It was extremely embarrassing to the British Government to have the wife of the district chief kidnapped in the district itself. After many discussions, it was felt that only an officer who had earlier dealt with tribesmen could rescue her. At that time travel between India and UK was only by ship, but fortunately for the British Government, the Imperial Airways had started an England-Australia service via Karachi. A telegram was sent to Lawther to return immediately. He was ordered to come by the Imperial Airways flight to Karachi which he did, the only luggage he had with him was a hold- all, his dog and his crate of whisky.

The story ended happily as Lawther on returning to Peshawar donned his Pathan dress and ventured deep into the tribal territory where he located the kidnapped lady, paid a ransom for her and brought her back home.

In June 1931, Lawther retired from service as DIG and was packing his bags to go back to England. It was at this time that Hari Kishen Kaul invited him to become the IGP of Kashmir State, which he accepted. Lawther was a no nonsense man, who was not afraid of anyone in the British establishment. He had contempt for the ordinary British Officer and would refer to Col. E.J.D.Colvin who later became the Prime Minister of Kashmir as “Son of a tongawala”

It was the combination of Kaul and Lawther aided by Muttoo that helped to put the insurrection down. Lawther was a bachelor, the only relative he had was an elder sister who tried and tried to get him to marry.

After he took over as IGP, he re-organized the department and got rid of many corrupt and inefficient officers. At that time apart from the IGP, the State of Jammu and Kashmir had only three DIGs, one for Kashmir, one for Jammu and one for the CID.

Within three months, he had pinpointed two DIGs who were thoroughly corrupt. His daily routine was such that nobody could predict where he would go for inspection. Within the first few days, after taking over when curfew was in force in Srinagar, his department needed money urgently for expenses. No banks were open and the State Treasury had been locked up with all the officials running away. He strode with his staff to the gate of the treasury, had it opened and went inside himself, took out rupees one lakh. When the frightened official, who had been summoned from home, timidly asked Lawther as to how he should describe the withdrawal in the Treasury records, Lawther replied “Write, Bahukme, Lawther Shahi” by the royal order of Lawther. It was translated into English and this piece of paper is still in the archives of the Jammu and Kashmir state. He had only one relaxation- he would sit at home with a glass of whisky in his hand, his dog near his foot and his orderly in attendance.

Lawther belonged to the British working class, his family had worked in India for generations and he had a great sympathy for the lowest strata of society. One day he had a conversation with his orderly, which revealed this.

“Sher Afghan, how many constables have I dismissed?”

“None Sir”, came the reply of the loyal orderly.

How many DIGs have I dismissed?

“Two Sir”

Lawther wanted the approval of the small man with whom he sympathized. After conditions had returned to normal in 1931, he fell into the routine of going for lunch and despite the fact he had an official driver (Pandit Shyamlal, one of the few Kashmiri Pandits who took to driving a vehicle), he would drive himself. He had a fabulous car, a 1921 Mercedes Benz convertible which had once belonged to King Ammanullah Khan of Afghanistan.

During this period when Indian revolutionaries like Madan Lal and other contemporaries of Bhagat Singh had started using guns and bombs, Lawther had been put on what the British had called “Anti-terrorist operation”. He arrested Madan Lal who was a comrade of Bhagat Singh. After that, the terrorists had targeted him and one of the reasons for getting a convertible was that he could see in all directions, which was not possible in a closed car.

He was feared as a very strict officer, but it was known that he was fair and just. One day, he left for lunch without his driver and on reaching Lal Chowk (in these days it was called Amira Kadal Chowk and later Palladium Chowk and finally after 1947 Lal Chowk) in Srinagar, he found the traffic constable who should have been on duty at the traffic island, missing. In those days, the numbers of cars on that road were few and the IGP's car with the magic number JKP-1 was known to all. With a screech the car braked to a halt in the middle of the road. He parked on the side and came out, climbed the steps and started directing the traffic in the place of the constable.

The unfortunate constable was across the road smoking a cigarette. The cigarette fell from his hand and he knew that not only would his job go, he might even be jailed for dereliction of duty. The pawnshop wala looked at him and he looked at the IGP standing directing traffic. With a sigh of resignation, he loosened his belt and crossed the road and stood in front of Lawther at attention and held out his belt to the IGP.

Lawther understood and since the entire Chowk population was watching, he stepped down and in his best parade ground voice told him to put his belt on and get back to his duty. He got into his car and drove away. Within minutes everybody in town came to know about it.

Many people at that time were curious to know how an Englishman had agreed to serve under an Indian and that too, a Kashmiri Pandit.

The story goes back to the time when Lawther had just become a DIG and the incident of the kidnapping of the DC's wife had taken place. After the lady was restored to her husband, the Governor of the province felt that the respect of this officer had been irretrievably damaged. Hence, he was immediately transferred to a district in UP. Now the question of a replacement arose. The kidnapping incident had emboldened the hostile tribesmen who were making boasts in the bazaar that they would kidnap the wife of the next officer also who came to Peshawar.

A great deal of soul searching within the establishment took place. It was felt that even if an unsuccessful attempt was made on the wife of the new Deputy Commissioner, it would be bad for the morale. Hence a search was launched for a result oriented successful Indian officer to replace the Englishman and take over as DC Peshawar. The man who was selected was Raja Hari Kishen Kaul who years later became the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir. When rumours started that a retired Indian Commissioner from Punjab was coming and that too, a turbaned Brahmin from Kashmir, the tribals enjoyed a good laugh. Where the British had failed, how could the Indian succeed?

Hari Kishen Kaul is part of the tribal folklore. He was strict, ruled with an iron hand and the crime rate practically fell to zero. It was a part of Lawther's duty to meet the Deputy Commissioner for maintaining law and order in the district. And that's how Hari Kishen Kaul and Lawther knew each other.

Speaking of Kaul, Lawther declared that:

"I am not afraid of the Viceroy or the Governor, but I am afraid of that man. You know he can get my pension stopped"

And thus ends the Lawther Shahi period in the history of Kashmir. After he left, all the IGPs of Kashmir till 1947 were British.

After Law and Order had been restored, summer gave way to autumn and already there was a nip in the air and one fine day it was the last week of October 1931 – time for the

Durbar move when the Government moved from the Srinagar to Jammu. While certain offices of the Police Department moved to Jammu, the IGP was the last to go. His famous convertible Mercedes Benz was going to cross the Banihall to Jammu and he had with him his driver and his PA. It was a very powerful car with a left wheel drive and Lawther chose to drive himself. His driver who accompanied him sat in the back seat along with P.A Sapru.

It was intensely cold as they started to climb the Pir Panjal Mountain. The winding road was negotiated with ease by Lawther. Soon it began to snow. The two passengers at the back were shivering but they dared not ask Lawther to pull down the hood. Now snow began to accumulate on the front and the back seat of the car.

The only defence that Sapru had against the intense biting, freezing cold was his packet of cigarettes, an expensive brand called Gold Flake. He kept on chain smoking to keep out the cold and thankfully he had enough stock.. Eventually, the next day they reached Jammu.

Several days later, once the office started functioning in the first week of November at Jammu, Lawther called Sapru to his room and after discussing certain official matters with him casually asked.

“How many children have you got?”

Sapru was totally surprised at this question and blurted out, “One, Sir”.

“Can you afford Gold Flake Cigarettes on your salary?”

Total Silence. Suddenly Sapru realized that during the car drive, Lawther had been watching him through the side rear view mirror of the car and therefore knew during the journey he had smoked the entire packet of cigarettes.

That evening was the last day when he smoked a cigarette. He gave up smoking when he was 28 yrs old and did not touch a cigarette until he passed away at the ripe old age of 90 years

Whisky Hospitality

When the 1931 riots broke out they were largely engineered from Punjab by the pre-partition Muslim League. Small Rajas and Chiefs of Principalities like Poonch Rajauri and Mirpur revolted and a great many killings took place before Raja Hari Krishen Kaul and B.C.A Lawther were called in to control the situation and put down violence. Overall, there was not that much of violence in the valley itself as there was in these places especially in Mirpur and a small place there called Samnani.

Since this area in the Jammu province was the bigger trouble spot and there was danger of it spreading to Jammu District, Lawther took the decision to go there and control the situation. The Prime Minister ordered a unit of Dogra Cavalry to accompany the I.G.P. Law and order had broken down and on the way Lawther’s party saw the results of the handiwork of the anti social elements.

Men had been murdered, women kidnapped and houses burnt to the ground. Most Government officials had run away. The Police was totally conspicuous by their absence. On arrival at Mirpur, he found out that those who were responsible for the violence were still in town and pretending to be on the side of the forces of Law and Order.

Calling his assistant, Lawther ordered messages to be sent to these Petty Chieftains to come and meet him. Chairs were spread out under a huge tree and they arrived in a

delegation, were asked to sit and explain their version of the recent events in Mirpur. As expected, they lied and lied and lied. As each one was explaining his fanciful position, Lawther was getting impatient and angrier by the minute.

Earlier, to show his friendship and hospitality, he offered from his private stock, which he carried with him, whisky to the petty chieftains. With each one lying, he soon reached a stage where he decided to take matters in hand. According to the plan prepared earlier, he signalled the commander of the cavalry unit to surround the group and ordered his immediate staff to handcuff them.

The guests were shocked as they were led away by the police. The whole place emptied as evening was falling and Lawther's classic comment was, "The damned fellows, they drink my whisky and yet they tell me lies".

A minute later he shouted "Sher Afghan, Humara whisky le ao". By this time, his Alsatian dog sauntered out and Lawther was at peace with the world although the nearest part to him was in flames.

By August / September when peace had been restored in the valley, calm and quiet prevailed in Srinagar and autumn came and soon it was time for the Durbar to Jammu. It was during British rule and Christmas was an important festival for the British Officer. As usual, Lawther had purchased about 200 Christmas cards, which in those days had to be hand written and signed with individual messages. Even the outside cover of the card had to be written by hand.

As usual, part of this work was done in the office and Lawther handed over these 200 Christmas cards to a clerk in his department where my father was also working. The clerk in question took custody of the cards and promised to go the Post office and find out how much stamp each one should have, buy the stamps, paste them and post them.

Just ten days before Christmas, Lawther asked my father whether the clerk in question had posted the Christmas cards. My father asked the person concerned and found out from his nervous behaviour that something was wrong. Eventually, he got it out of him that he had lost all the 200 Christmas cards and was afraid to face the IG, BCA Lawther. But he had no alternative except to confess to his crime.

At first, the singsong type of English that the clerk spoke did not make any sense to Lawther, but when he understood he hit the roof. He started screaming and shouting at the clerk and threatened him with dire consequences, but being a balanced person he understood what had happened and nothing he would do could bring his Christmas cards back. He took my father aside, gave him money told him to buy fresh cards and sent him away from the room.

Now the clerk was standing like a condemned wretch in front of the IGP. Lawther looked around trying to think of some punishment for the clerk. But he could not think of anything that would punish him but spare his family. In sheer frustration, he looked around the room and saw a Remington typewriter in the corner and suddenly an idea came to him.

"Go pick up that typewriter". The clerk was mystified but rushed forward to obey. "Now put it on your head". In the thirties of the twentieth century, Kashmiri Pandit clerks and others all wore turbans. Thus the typewriter gently rested on the turban perched on top of the clerk's head. It was a ludicrous sight for my father to see when he returned from the market with fresh Christmas cards that the guilty clerk had already begun his punishment.

On enquiry he found, that Lawther had ordered the clerk to go up and down the length of the room with the typewriter on his head one hundred times. This was his punishment. After about half an hour, Lawther called Sapru and told him in a very quiet subdued, controlled voice.

“Go and tell him to stop”. By this time the clerk had only done 20 laps across the room. So much for Lawther Shahi.

Lawther, B.C.A was awarded C.I.E on June 3, 1931.

Heroic Cop

The Dal Lake perhaps is as famous as the name of Kashmir itself. It was during the time of Maharaja Pratap Singh that Srinagar got its first paved roads. As was the normal practice, the first automobile to come to the Kashmir Valley and owned by one living in the valley was the Rolls Royce of the Maharaja.

As in every other city in British India, the princely states also emulated them. The cantonment area began to make its appearance in almost all the princely states and Kashmir got its share of it. The only difference was that in the beginning, it was called the Civil Lines area beginning with Residency Road, Dal Gate and the adjoining road to the lake itself which was given the high sounding name “Boulevard”. Of course, the cantonment had already made its presence felt in the early twenties and was known as “Badami Bagh”.

These areas were more or less out of bounds for the local population. Only the British and other European visitors would be seen motoring down the Boulevard or taking an evening stroll on the road adjoining the lake.

Our story begins at the time of dusk during the early autumn when there is a nip in the air announcing the arrival of winter. A well-dressed English gentleman, obviously an official of the State Government accompanied by his Mem Sahib, was walking on the footpath near the bend where the road in the shade of the Shankaracharya Hill bends to the right. There is a small hollow in the hillock where in 1920, a police outpost was set up for security because there had been reports of thefts in the area.

In this police outpost, there was a constable who was keen and enthusiastic about his work. He took the warning given by the Sub-inspector about thieves very seriously. In a house, a little away from the police outpost, a thief was trying to escape because the owner on seeing him raised a hue and cry.

Our heroic policemen heard it and reacted with speed and efficiency. He gave chase and was steadily gaining on the thief. Unfortunately, he came out of the lane and started running on the footpath where the English couples were strolling. The thief passed them and so did the constable in hot pursuit. Just at the bend, the constable caught the thief and was grappling with him.

By this time, the shadows had come and darkness had fallen. The Englishman officer saw two natives fighting and decided to take action. After all they had disturbed his evening walk.

He strode forward and shouted, “What is going on here”. Both the constable and the thief were busy trying to subdue each other and did not hear his voice. The sahib was now furious and decided to take a hand in the matter. Leaving his wife a few feet away, he

strode forward and aimed a strong kick with his boot on one of them. Unknown to him, the kick fell on the constable and he turned round and when he saw an English Sahib, he immediately stood up and saluted him and explained that he was a policeman chasing a thief.

Mollified a bit, the Englishman said “Carry on”, but in the meanwhile, the thief seeing that the attention of the limb of law was diverted momentarily, ran away and now the poor constable stood helplessly, while the Englishman wanted to know why he had let go of the thief when he turned round to talk to him.

Within minutes, everyone in Srinagar knew about it. All that can be said in the defence of the constable was that he was in awe of the white man. He was terrified after he saw that the thief had fled. Just goes to show what people thought of the All Mighty British even in a princely state.

P.S: This constable it may be noted was promoted later and retired honourably as Sub-Inspector.

Hari Singh Ka Raj Hai

It was late October almost 10 years after Maharaja Hari Singh ascended the gaddi of Jammu and Kashmir state. Hectic preparations were on for the Durbar move to Jammu in the first week of November. On the spur of the moment, the Maharaja decided to drive to Jammu. The decision was taken at 4 p.m. and just two cars started off from Srinagar towards Qazigund en-route to Banihall.

Prior to this, there had been reported a number of cases where wild animals had come down to the road and attacked travellers in buses, cars and trucks. So the Government, under instruction from the Maharaja, had passed an order that between sunset and sunrise, no vehicular traffic would be permitted on the Banihall Cart Road (B.C.Road).

But such a rule would not be applicable to the Maharaja and his retinue. By the time, he would reach Qazigund, it would be dark. The IG was informed and promptly messages were flashed all along the route. The Maharaja was accompanied by only his driver and his pilot car (open car) Dinshaw Patel was the pilot.

Now the Maharaja had a strange fascination for speed. The pilot car was a Chevrolet and the Maharaja’s car was a Rolls Royce.

The two cars were proceeding smoothly when the Maharaja asked his driver to speed up and overtake the pilot car, which was leading the way. As the Maharaja’s car crept closer to the pilot car, the pilot desperately urged his driver to go faster, but the Rolls Royce overtook him. The pilot kept on shouting at his driver to go faster. Fortunately, they were driving on a straight flat road between Khanabal and Qazigund. The driver of the pilot car became increasingly nervous as the VVIP car had overtaken them and was almost a mile ahead.

The driver did not notice a small depression on the road and the convertible that he was driving went over it with a thud. The pilot sitting in the back seat was thrown out and landed in a nearby ditch. The driver did not even know that pilot was no longer in the car. He kept on driving and was relieved to see in the distance that the Maharaja’s car had stopped. The Maharaja came out and was laughing. The driver turned around to talk to the pilot, but found the back seat empty. Nervously, he looked back and saw Patel

running towards the car. Huffing and puffing with exertion Patel ran towards the Maharaja saluted and profusely apologized. The Maharaja enquired whether he had been hurt. Patel looked at his king and said:

“No, Sarkar. Only my dignity is hurt. I should have been ahead of you”, Patel said looking at his mud-splattered uniform.

“Let us proceed further”, said Hari Singh. So off they went at a much-reduced speed. By this time, it was nearing 6 O’clock and darkness had almost set. Both the cars had their headlights on and the beam of the Rolls Royce headlights could stretch for more than a mile. As the shadows increased and it became fully dark, the pilot car suddenly slowed down when the driver saw about a 100 sheep under the control of a shepherd (Bakrawal). The sheep bawled out and began to run helter skelter. The Bakrawal was shouting and trying to control his flock.

Meanwhile, the two cars slowly reached close enough to the milling sheep and the Bakrawal. The driver shouted and Patel shouted more, but to no avail. Finally, the Maharaja’s driver also joined in the shouting. The Bakrawal was getting increasingly frustrated and angry.

The following conversation ensued.

“Hurry up and push your sheep out of the way. Do you know who are delaying, you stupid Bewaqf?”

“What do you mean? I have as much right as you have on this road. Do you know, this is Hari Singh’s Raj and I will complain to him and get justice from him”, the Bakrawal shouted back.

In the Rolls Royce, the Maharaja heard the dialogue, smiled to himself and got out of the car. The headlights lighted his face and the Bakrawal’s face was a study in shock. He went down on his knees and stuttered “Sarkar....” Hari Singh ordered him to get up and told him to take his time in collecting the sheep and crossing the road. The Bakrawal rushed to do his bidding with the two drivers, the king and his pilot watching the scene.

The episode closed with the Maharaja presenting Rs.100 to the Bakrawal (This was a princely sum in those days)

And so, the Maharaja went to Qazigund, the sheep went across the road and the Bakrawal could not believe his good fortune.

Peel

E.G.B. Peel, who succeeded Lawther as the IGP, was considered a misfit in the Police force because he held a Master’s degree in Literature from the Oxford University and was proud of his scholarship. He joined the Indian Police and served for most of his career in UP. He was a DIG when he was offered the IGP’s post in Kashmir. He had a violent temper and since he had served in U.P he knew all the profane curses in Urdu. As UP was known for its culture and polite language he would sometimes flare up in anger and shout at someone in front of him “bahanchod ji”, the “ji” at the end was perhaps a concession to the culture of U.P. His wife used to say that it was his temper that came in the way of his promotion to the IG rank in UP. She was as sober as he was temperamental.

When Peel came to Kashmir he brought an official P.A. with him. In those days P.A. to the IGP was a gazetted rank and generally an ASP or an SP would fill the post. The man

who came along with Peel was W.H. Archbold, a handsome man, a bachelor and an efficient police officer. Both of them, Peel and Archbold, having served in British India, had enough experience of internal and external intrigues. Since Archbold was younger and single, he was out practically every night dancing and partying. He was the most sought after dance partner at the Residency dances.

An interesting incident concerns him. He had a Alsatian dog. In the evenings, Archbold used to change into civilian clothes and leave his service revolver in the drawer in his bedroom.

There was at that time a Sub-Inspector who wanted desperately to become an Inspector. He thought of a plan. He arranged for one of the domestic staff of Archbold to go into his bedroom and steal his service revolver. The deed was done on a night when Archbold was out dancing and the only occupant of the house was his Alsatian. The next morning, the theft was discovered and Archbold was mortally afraid of his boss Peel's anger. He kicked the poor dog taking out his anger on him with the words " what the hell were you doing when the thief came".

After a while, better sense prevailed and the IGP's Office Superintendent who heard about the theft, made discreet enquiries, told Archbold that it was an inside job because the dog would have certainly barked if the thief was a stranger. Well, the revolver was found by the man who had arranged the theft without Archbold knowing about his scheme. With the revolver back, the Sub-Inspector was transferred to police lines.

After several years in Kashmir Peel left Kashmir and Archbold succeeded him as the IGP in 1939. Peel went to Mysore and stayed there till 1943, when he finally retired.

Peel's wife was a very sweet natured motherly type of woman. Once she and her husband were driving from Khanabal to Srinagar when they stopped at the roadside to cool the engine of the brand new Morris car which Peel had purchased recently. The car being new, the hand brake when applied would give out a screeching sound. The driver Sham Lal was always afraid whenever he had to apply the brake because Peel Sahib would invariably shout "Bahanchod, Ji, are you trying to ruin my new car".

The driver used to be petrified since it was the IGP shouting at him and one day he turned up at our house and fell at my father's feet begging him to save him from the wrath of the Sahib. So one day, choosing the right moment, he told Peel "Sir, please don't shout at Sham Lal. In a new car, this always happens". This was the 1936 of Morris model just then imported into India.

At Khanabal, a small incident took place when their pet dog wandered from the car and a curious villager looked at it. The dog barked, the villager got scared, picked up a stone and threw it at the dog. It got hurt and ran back to Mrs. Peel who was sitting in the car. Instead of saying anything to the villager for having thrown a stone at the dog, Mrs. Peel shouted at her own dog and said the following immortal words. "Why did you bark at him. Serves you right" .

It has been stressed earlier in this narrative that Peel was very proud of his penmanship especially in the English language. After coming to India, he also studied Urdu and could speak, write and read the language like a native.

One day, as usual, he had dictated a certain memorandum in which he had used a slightly lesser known word, which my father could not understand. However he took it down as Peel spelt it out for him and after he left the room, consulted the Oxford English Dictionary, where he discovered that Peel had given him the wrong spelling.

As soon as the typed memorandum was placed before him, he began to read with his pen in his hand. He came to the offending word and began to shout:

“I gave you the spelling of the word and you still make a mistake, you put in the wrong spelling”.

“But Sir that was the wrong spelling “.

“Are you trying to teach me English?”

“No Sir, but the Oxford Dictionary says so”.

“I don’t believe it, let me see it”.

The dictionary was brought and it was seen and proved conclusively that the Oxford educated English Inspector General of Police of Jammu and Kashmir State was wrong and the humble Kashmiri Pandit clerk was right.

“His face was a curious mixture of puzzlement and confusion”, said Mahadeo Sapru years later while recalling this incident.

Peel looked up at his assistant and said these famous last words.

“I have been damned all my life. I thought these were the spellings, but they are not.

THANK YOU SAPRU FOR CORRECTING ME. I AM GRATEFUL.”

When Peel’s term of office came to an end, he was invited by the Maharaja of Mysore to become the IGP of Mysore, which eventually he became and finally retired in 1943.

But when his term was ending, the Kashmir government was looking for a successor to him. And in Princely States, seniority was not strictly adhered to as in British India. Most requests from Indian States for posting a British Officer to them were processed by the Political Department in New Delhi and it was suggested that since an British Officer was already in Kashmir, he could be offered the post of IGP and could succeed Peel. The Political Department was referring of course to Archbold who was a senior SP.

The suggestion was accepted and Archbold was appointed IGP.

This was a bitter pill for Peel to swallow, being succeeded by his own official PA.

Peel, Eardley Garforth Bryan, C.I.E, Indian Police, born March 12th 1888, United Provinces cadre, retired as I.G.P, Jammu & Kashmir after serving the state for eight years, in April 1939 after which appointed as I.G.P, Mysore State. which he served till 1943 when he finally retired. He was awarded C.I.E on June 2nd 1923 when he was in the U.P. Police.

Archbold, William Hugh, Indian Police (Supt., United Provs) (b. Jan 5, 1904) – joined the service as asst.supt., United Provs., Nov.1923; offg.supt., Jan.1927; and again, Nov.1932; confd., Oct.1936; inspr.genl., Kashmir , Aug. 1935. Served J.&K.State from 1935 –39 as P.A to I.G.P which in those days was a gazetted rank usually that of S.P. from that he was directly taken as I.G.P on the retirement of E.G.B. Peel in 1939.

Bell, Ronald. S

By the time RS Bell took over as IGP in the mid forties, Mahadeo Sapru had thoroughly stabilized himself in his position as a key person in the IGP’s Office. He was also promoted as the Office Superintendent of the CID and would advise the Police Chief about the politics of the department as also the integrity and efficiency of the officers.

One such case comes to mind where he tried his best to mete out justice to a poor humble constable who was victimized by a high ranking officer who was a DIG. This officer had suspended the constable who hailed from the Jammu region and prior to this had forcibly

transferred him to Kashmir Province. When he put in a representation, he was told by someone close to the DIG, that he would have to pay a certain sum if he wanted his suspension revoked and he transferred back to Jammu Province.

On a constable's pay, he could not meet the demand and was forced to sell his wife's gold jewellery after which he paid the money. Despite this, the suspension continued and since in those days no subsistence allowance during the period of suspension, he had come practically to starvation level.

He knocked at many doors, but nobody could buck the DIG. At last, someone suggested to him that he should approach the right hand man of the IGP who they assured him was totally honest. So one day, this half starved constable appeared at our house and requested to see Mahadeo Sapru who already knew about this case.

Looking at the man in this pitiable condition, Sapru decided to do something about it. Bell, his boss, was a very reasonable and even-tempered man. So a few days later, he approached Bell after lunch when he was in a good, expansive mood and related the entire background of the case to him.

"Since it comes within the DIG's powers, I don't think I can do anything about it", said Bell.

"But Sir, you are the Chief of the Police Force and the lower ranks look upon you as their God and father. Justice demands that something should be done to put this man out of his misery. After all, the Police Force has more constables in it than DIGs"

For a few minute there was pin drop silence and then Bell looked up and said

"Do you have a solution?"

"Yes Sir. You have overriding powers under the Police Act and you can overrule anyone's decision. If you approve, we can from the Central Office issue an order reinstating the constable and cancelling the suspension period by treating him as on duty for it. Apart from it, we can also issue a transfer order transferring him back to Jammu. That way he will have some money with which to live on and will be able to go back to where he came from."

"All right, do it".

Within minutes, the two orders were ready and signed but not released. A trusted subordinate was sent to search for the constable who was sent under escort to the Accountant General's office to identify him so that he could draw his TA and his back pay. Without an order in writing, he would not get anything.

So, Sapru went personally to the AG's Office and handed over the order to Pandit Premanand who was then the Accountant General of the State. The money was delivered to the constable and he was not allowed to roam around lest he be identified and the DIG informed about his reinstatement. At night, he was accommodated in a trusted person's house and early next morning, he was sent in a goods truck to Jammu and told to report to a Police Officer there to whom Sapru had already given detailed instructions.

For the constable, it seemed like a dream. That he was grateful was expected but his greatest fear was that he would be caught before he was out of the reach of the DIG. But he managed it and when Bell asked Sapru about it, he said that Justice had been done.

Many years later in 1965 when this writer and his father Mahadeo Sapru were at the Tourist Reception Centre trying to book a seat to Pathankot, a man suddenly came from behind and saluted my father, who just stared at the man. By this time, my father had long since left the Police Department and asked the man as to he was.

“Sir I am the same constable whose life you saved during Bell Sahib’s time”

Suddenly, the light dawned and my father smiled and asked him, “So how are you, where are you posted now?”

“Sir I am now SP, Ladakh. Sir is there anything I can do for you now. Have you come to buy a ticket?”

“No thank you, we just bought a ticket”.

And that is where it ended, but one does remember an Englishman’s sense of justice and an Indian’s determination to see that it is done.

P.S. Till the late fifties, Bell kept in touch with M.Sapru through letters.

Powell, Richard, late Indian Police (United Provs) (b.Apr. 4, 1889) – Joined the service as asst.Supt., Dec.5, 1908; in military employ from April 19, 1915, to June 4, 1916; asst. to I.G., C.I.D , Aug., 1918; supt., May 1922; Princpal., P.T.Sch., Moradabad, Dec., 1925; asst. to I.G., Jan.,1937; D.I.G, Apl., 1939; retd., Apr.4, 1944 and re-empld. In dept. of war transport , April , 1944 to Feb.,1946. Subsequently appointed I.G.P of Jammu & Kashmir on contractual basis for two years.

Just before the Kabaili invasion from Pakistan, his services were terminated and he crossed over to Muzaffarabad and Rawalpindi and joined the Pakistan Forces in an Advisory Capacity.

Across Pir Panjal

Soon after the Pakistan aggression on various fronts in J & K in October 1947, the golden autumn paled down and the valley fell in the grip of snowy winter. The native, though used to such snows and frosts from early years, suffered a feeling of insecurity. All the same, the highest mountain peaks with their stature and dense forests around, stood like trusted sentinels. The people and the stranded visitors, prayed to God on bended knees for his mercy. Kashmir had never been such a trouble spot in the recent history. The Indian Air Force, however, proved a providential helped in the Indian Army in chasing the aggressors and restoring a sense of security throughout the valley. The writer was then employed in one of the direction offices of the Maharaja’s Government, which used to move to Jammu annually by the end of autumn. The Banihal Cart Road which connects Jammu with Srinagar climbs up a height of 9000 feet, and provides a tunnel at the top. The journey though not as comparable as at present, used to be a fascinating drive of 200 miles usually when covered within two days, over the circuitous cart road. We had orders to move to Jammu as before and the year had rolled down to its last month i.e. December when the road was closed to wheeled traffic. Under thick clouds and falling snow we packed up and motored up to Qazigund, a township 40 miles away from Srinagar. The gentle rising gradients of the “Pir Panjal” start from here. It’s surroundings and the housetop were also snow clad. It was a striking and superb scene, the like of which was not seen before. We had now to try our strength against the precipitous heights at its base standing in front of us. Fir and Devdar forests looked happy. We walked up to the Verinag spring close by, where the river Jhelum takes its source. The springs and the environs took us back to the Moghul times, when its Emperors Shah Jahan & Jehangir use3d to spend nights at the spot during their sojourn to

Kashmir. Looking around we found grey patches of the foot-path which we had to depend on. Much against our expectations, we found quite a good number of locals (actively buzzing about and booking various parties for helping them to cross over to the other side of the mountain). We hired a party of 5 with sturdy cooks and spent the night mostly talking about the next day of adventure. Next morning they woke us up at early dawn, and provided us with grass shoes when fitted with our shoes and wooden staffs to support us while climbing. We equipped ourselves as best as we could, and off we went. The untrodden snow on the ground and over the mountain tops and the steep ridges was a relief to the eyes. Soon after the glittering rays of the sun in our eyes fell over the standing peaks and the deep lying slopes, and we felt greatly comforted. Step by step, we negotiated the uphill climb. It was a long line of pedestrians, each quick breathing and often looking behind to know how much he had gained. A similar chain of loaded pedestrians were descending the slopes from the opposite direction. They mostly carried petrol cans, and some essentials commodities of life. Our guides went ahead of us with a promise to meet us at the low level on the other side of the tunnel, and cautioned us to move in quick and not be late.

The Army was not much to be seen at this spot, as they were reportedly pre-occupied at other vital fronts-building roads and searching for the marauders. The sky was still clear until after mid-day and the sun quite bright and warm. The wind was whistling and grew fiercer from hour to hour. During our brief halts en route, we helped ourselves to brave dry fruit and milk. The cold wind came to be a regular battle with us, and we braved it helping ourselves with doses of brandy. Luckily, we felt I enough to face against the Mighty Wind (locally “War Mal” i.e. unbreaking and non-stop wind).

We were worried against getting lazy and losing our nerve. We heard talking in low voice about certain casualties caused by this mountain scourge. Reaching the top of “Pir Panjal” from Kashmir side and entering the tunnel was a thrilling experience, and we halted at the other end for short-while. Resuming our journey soon because of the pinching cold and strong wind, we felt like being to hit by the piercing cold wind. The top provided a grand view of the valley as one side and the sloping hills on in the Jammu side. The weather took a sudden rough turn, and our guide from below shouted at us to come down by crawling, skating and whatever device we found but to come out of the danger zone. We took great risk as there was no other go, and reached the curve of a road at a low level where safety welcomed us. All was not, however, well. Reaching the Banilal township after it was dark, we reached to the Rest House. Exhausted as we were, we snatched the hot meals and soon after took to sleep.

Rising late next morning, we felt as if newly born. But the cause showed its effect, and two of us had an attack of dysentery perhaps because of brandy.

We however, wanted moving ahead with the life, and doasded a but to Jammu. It landed us at the destination safely after dark, and back to the rut of life again.

Mahadeo Sapru, *March 1, 1978.*

Note : Jawahar Lal Sopory, the author’s companion on his journey across Pir Panjal was a colleague in the Police Department, Traffic Section. An M.A, from Allahabad University, he had a good command of English and after 1947 became Assistant Transport Controller of Jammu and Kashmir Government. He died suddenly in 1953 *****

Nerves Of Inspection

All over India the ordinary Indian was terrified of the white man, always preferring to stay at a safe distance from him. This was more so in princely states like Mysore, Kashmir, Baroda, Indore, Hyderabad, Gwalior etc. Most Indian princes got departmental heads from British India. This was especially so in Mysore and Kashmir from 1931 to 1947. All the IGPs of Kashmir State have been Englishmen.

Our story concerns the fear that the average junior officer had of the mighty Englishman and how nervous and terrified they became in their presence. The story concerns an English IGP who conducted a surprise inspection of a police station in the rural areas of the Kashmir valley. However the English Sahib with his local clerk displayed the courtesy of stopping his car in front of the Sub Inspector's residence and sending his Pandit emissary to inform him that he had come to inspect his police station.

When the emissary entered the house, the Sub Inspector was highly pleased to see him and invited him to have tea. But when he learnt that the big White Chief was outside in his car, he lost his colour. The emissary told him to get dressed in his uniform quickly and come out. Our hero got so nervous that he put on his pants backwards and shouted at his poor wife to tie the belt at the back. In his hurry to reach the presence of his IG, he forgot that this anomaly would be visible to the white man. The Englishman in question was a very sober individual (R.S. Bell) who told his clerk and simultaneously informed the Sub Inspector to go and get dressed properly while he would await him at the police station.

So much for nervousness.

Needless to say, despite this embarrassment, the sub inspector in question got a very good report from the IG who did not take seriously the Faux pas committed by our hero.

12

The Maker Of Shali Store

Today in independent India, we take the idea of buffer stock foodgrains held by the State Governments and the Centre for granted, but hardly anybody in India knows who pioneered the system of buying grain for an emergency like drought, flood or any other calamity.

The system of buying grains by the State Government and stabilizing its price even during normal times and ensuring equitable supply through fair price shops was pioneered in Kashmir in the early 20s by an astute administrator named Raja Narendra Nath Koul, belonging to the family of Raja Hari Kishen Koul and the Daya Kishen Koul. He had to face many odds but he was fortunate to get help from Tyndale Biscoe and perhaps the only record of his achievement has been penned down by this great educationist of Kashmir in his autobiography published after his death.

After his magnificent performance, he was appointed the Revenue Minister by the Maharaja. Unfortunately, he died soon after.

This is the account of his struggle and the help given to him by Biscoe Sahib and Major C. Haddow:

Innovative Administrator

After the Great war, the galladars i.e., sellers of grain, fuel contractors, butchers and bakers backed up by certain high officials of the state, combined to prevent food and fuel from entering the city and they thereby succeeded in raising the price of necessities.

“Narendra Nath Koul , who was then Governor, had been disappointed at having been ploughed in the I.C.S. examination in London and hence became disgruntled against the British. He hated the Mission School and all its works.

“As the city people were half starved, Shanker Koul and I visited him to offer the help of the school staff and boys to fight the famine. The Governor received us very coldly, but our answers to his questions changed his manner, and he accepted our offered help.

“I went to our friend and adviser Mr. Cecil Haddow, telling him of the Governor’s altered attitude and he came with me to the Governor and the latter accepted Haddow’s offer of twenty five men from his carpet factory, who were Mohammedans, as well as fifty of our school teachers who were Hindus.

“The Governor sent members of our staff together with two of his government servants (to watch our men, lest they accepted bribes) for thirty miles up and down the river to bring loaded boats containing rice, grain, “shali” and firewood into the city.

“Many boats arrived. When the salesmen in the city realized that food was in the city, they closed all the food shops. The Governor then opened state shops and put our men in charge. These shops were besieged and the male bipeds prevented the women from obtaining the food. Our men then provided themselves with single sticks, and by using them freely they kept a path open for the women to approach the shops. The women then began fighting one another for the shali.

“What were our men to do? They were given orders to serve first all women with babies. The salesmen reported the next day that every woman had a baby and were still fighting one another, so they were ordered to supply those women with twins first, and the those with one baby only.

“Next day, the salesman reported that every woman had two babies, so, not wishing to encourage triplets, the shali was placed in boats, which were moored to the bank of the river. A plank connected each boat with the bank of the river. A plank connected each boat with the bank and our boys were placed at the plank, armed with single sticks, to prevent bipeds pushing on board before the women. This worked well for two days, until the bipeds, being angry shoved the women into the river and one or two were drowned. The boats were then anchored out in the river and shali sold only to those who arrived in the authorized tender, and so at last all went well.

“The Governor summoned to his court all the city fathers, head butchers, bakers galladars and fuel contractors, and fixed a “nirik” i.e., the price of food. Against this order all the butchers, bakers, & C., protested loudly, but the city cheered and praised the Governor. The Governor then ordered our men to apprehend all those who were breaking the “nerik” law.

“The scoundrels objected strongly and as our men went around the city they shouted: “There go the friends of hell let loose upon our city by Padre Biscoe.” But the Tehsildar (magistrate) , who happened to be an old Mission School boy, seized the culprits and called for barbers and donkeys. These lawbreakers had their faces shaved on one side only, and placed upon donkeys with their faces towards the tails and marched through the city with the town crier shouting in front of the procession: “These are the men who are cheating the people.”

“Mr. Hadow and the Governor called the city fathers together, and a co-operative society was started, which took over all food and saw to its proper distribution. We closed our schools for three months, so that our staff could act as clerks for this co-operative society.

“The butchers and bakers rushed off by car to Jammu, two hundred miles from Srinagar, to tell the Maharajah that the Governor, aided by Hadow and Biscoe, was persecuting the city. They also persuaded the Maulvis to preach in their mosques against the Governor, so that when his Highness arrived in Srinagar and proceeded in his state barge up the river, the whole Mohammedan population were to crowd the three miles of river bank to curse the Governor. They were to take with them long punting poles on the top of which empty gunny bags would be tied, and as High Highness passed they would cry:

“Starving, starving,” at the same time pointing to the empty sacks and patting themselves to show that their stomach were as empty as the sacks, and shouting : “The Governor is the cause”.

Governor’s plea

“On the morning of His Highness’ entry into Srinagar, I received an urgent letter from the Governor saying that the Maharajah was coming to Srinagar with the intention of turning him out of his post, and that the Maulvis had incited the populace to shout against him and ask for his dismissal. He ended by asking my help in preventing this river demonstration.

“A somewhat tall order for what could the school staff and boys do to counter this huge demonstration? However, I had a brainwave. I gave orders at once for the school boats to be brought from the Dal lake boathouse, to the school, and explained my plans to the staff. They were to take the school fleet to meet His Highness where he could enter his barge with all his state officials, both British and Indian, and to take position behind the barge to be in readiness to rush to either side of the river where they could act as a screen between Maharajah and the Governor’s enemies on the banks, As we were discussing this matter, a police notice was handed to me to the effect that no boats were to come within two hundred yards of his Highness’s barge. That a police boat screen would be in position to prevent all boats approaching His Highness. This snag required quick action, so I ordered the boat captains to obey my orders and ignore the police orders.

“It was 3.30 P.M. The guns at Hari Parbat fort fired twenty-one salutes and the State barge moved upstream with its sixty-eight boatmen and a steam tug pulling in front. The police boats took up their position in th rear, then our fleet formed up, the twelve oared cutter with the school band in the bows, led the ten school shikaras, two abreast, containing thirteen to fifteen boys each as crew.

“I was in command in my launch with field glasses and megaphone. After the procession had proceeded half a mile, I spotted a large party of empty sack wavers on the left bank of the river, so I shouted out through my megaphone: “Fleet to the left bank of the river, sharp.” Immediately, the fleet put on speed, through the police screen they went and right up to the right side fo the barge. When in position, I shouted: “Salute his Highness the Maharajah of Jammu and Kashmir.” The crews immediately stood with 150 oars and paddles at the salute, and the band struck up “For he ‘s a jolly good fellow”. The result was that H.H. saw no poles or bags and heard nothing but “He’s a jolly good fellow”.

When this danger point was passed, I ordered “Fleet to the rear”, which they obeyed promptly. About another half-mile on the right bank of the river, I saw a similar hurdle and sack crowd, so I ordered “Fleet to the right bank of the river”. Up went the fleet, and when in position I shouted: “Salute His Highness the Maharajah of Jammu and Kashmir.” The crew’s rose to attention with oars and paddles aloft and the band struck up “The Cock of the North”. The pole and sack wavers cursed our boys and ordered them out of the way, but in vain, as there was a gulf of deep water between. Again the Maharajah

heard and saw nothing but the loyal Mission School boys saluting him. Thus we went three miles up the river to his palace; and the Governor was saved.

Food shortage

“The trouble in Srinagar continued, as the food shortage had not ended. Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy, visited Kashmir to see what he could do. As he came up the river with His Highness in the state barge the officials had prepared excellent eyewash.

“Along both banks of the river for the three miles were barges full of rice and others loaded with fuel, with notices in English in letters large enough for him to see from his barge, “Shali for sale”, “Price cheap”, “firewood for sale”, “Price cheap”, so that he might see for himself that the city was not short of food but bursting with it. But what he did not see was that, as soon as his barge had passed, all these boats were taken out of the city and hidden in nullahs.

“As the next day was Sunday, I had to preach before the Viceroy in his suite and was able to let him know something of the sorrows of the citizens of Srinagar. Certain members of the congregation expressed their views on my bad taste for having spoken the truth at that occasion.

“The following evening, at a dinner party at the Residency, the Viceroy sent for me to sit by him and I had the opportunity of telling him the truth regarding the sufferings of the people. How the Kashmir State officials had tried to hoodwink him by bringing scores of barges full of grain all along his route through the city.

“Three days later, when I was holding my staff class in my garden, an old student rushed up to me breathless, and said: “Please hide me. Two other old students and I have been seized by the police for having sent a telegram to the Viceroy, but I have escaped, hide me, Sahib.” I asked: “What did you wire?” and he answered: “The city is starving.” Before I could act a policeman entered, dragging the two old students with him, so I was unable to prevent his being seized. I told the policeman, of course, what I thought of this injustice and then mounted my cycle and made my way to the house of the Indian chief judge, a Hindu. I offered to go to the prison myself, saying that I deserved it far more than my three old students who had just been taken to prison. Whereas they had only told the truth to the Viceroy by wire, I told him in his ear what these boys had wired and a good deal more. Therefore he must send me to the jail for mine was the greater crime. The upshot of it was that he promised to free the three boys the first thing next morning. The three were brought in chains to my house next day by a policeman. As soon as they were set free they ran to me and grasped my ankles in their joy.

“But the fight was by no means over, although Mr. Haddow had been giving an immense amount of time and energy to the running of the co-operative shali stores, for several of the senior State officials were on the side of the profiteers, who were pulling strings. So Lord Reading, who had succeeded Lord Chelmsford as Viceroy came to Kashmir to try and clear up the situation. He started his enquiry by calling Mr. Haddow and me to see him at the Residency. With him as legal adviser was Sir Grimwood Woodmears (Chief Justice of Allahabad)

“After thanking us for coming, he said: “ I have called you two gentlemen, as I know that you will tell me the real cause fo this profiteering.” We told him that was due to certain highly placed officials. He answered: “ I guessed as much. What is needed here is a law.”

“ Having asked Sir Grimwood to draft a law to make profiteering an offence, punishable by a heavy fine and imprisonment with hard labour, the Viceroy dismissed us with thanks for our help, and expressed the hope that we would join the Council of State officials which was to meet that evening. He made a strong speech at this meeting, asking the officials to consider how they would feel if they themselves had empty stomachs. He reminded them there could never be peace and contentment among starving people, and that it was he as Viceroy who had to see that India was a peaceful and happy country. In plain English, that humbug must cease.

Viceroy’s message

“The Viceroy spoke again at the banquet at the palace. The gist of his speech was as follows:

“Ladies and Gentlemen, you will, I know, have very great pleasure in drinking the health to our kind host, His Highness, when you hear that there is to be an end of the troubles of the people of this city due to the shortage of food, for his Highness has made a law which will stop people hereafter from making profit out of the sufferings of his subjects.”

Narendra Nath Koul, the Governor of Kashmir, whom his enemies the profiteers hoped to discomfort, was raised to the rank of Revenue Minister, but he enjoyed his new powers only for a short period. He fell ill and passed from us, to our great sorrow. Thousands of his admirers followed his body to the burning ghat bar-footed.

Later, the state took over the food control from the Co-operative Society, built upto date granaries and to our relief, put Captain Wreford in charge. We knew that as long as he was in control there would be no devilry or monkey tricks.

From: Autobiography of Tyndale – Biscoe, 1950

13

The Long And The Short Of The Story Is That Family Saga-I

Towards Excellence with Austerity

Lakshman Joo Sapru was a valley Kashmiri Pandit. Not much is known about him. He had two sons whose names were Baghwan Das Sapru and Sridhar Joo Sapru. Baghwan Das Sapru had two sons Raghu Nath Sapru and Mahadeo Sapru. Sridhar Sapru had four sons and two daughters. Our story concerns Baghwan Das Sapru's two sons.. Unfortunately, Baghwan Das Sapru died in his twenties leaving behind a widow Sonamal with two children and no means of support.

It is a miracle how she survived and brought up her two sons, educated them, got them married, saw her sons building a new house and had the pleasure of playing with eight grand children of whom my cousin sister (Kanta) is the youngest among the girls and yours truly is the youngest among the boys.

She was a determined woman who fought doggedly against all odds. Though she was illiterate, her fund of commonsense would put to shame any statesman or diplomat. Being a widow, Grandfather's cousin did not look on her with favour but while keeping all the customary behavior pattern going, she saw to it that her two young ones would be taken care of and survive to grow into manhood.

In this, she was greatly helped by her elder son who had inherited most of her sterling qualities. Raghu Nath Sapru had a one point programme in his life since he was acutely conscious of the poverty of the family and that was to achieve excellence at all costs and as far as possible not be too much of a burden on his poor widowed mother. He was a student of the state high school to which he used to walk every morning. He had no time piece at home to know the time when he should leave home for school.

One day, he was late for school and was admonished by the teacher. He was in a dilemma. How to tell the teacher that he did not have a timepiece. But he was a great innovator and had loads of commonsense. He went home and woke up the next morning bright and early and watched the sun's rays falling on the wall of the house. He brought a piece of chalk and marked it because the sun's rays had reached that particular spot on the wall at exactly 8 o'clock and that would give him a guide for reaching school on time.

Unfortunately, though the new system worked well, he did not take into consideration the change in seasons when the sun's rays would fall at a different place at the same time. However, he managed it eventually. He was a brilliant student and even before his matriculation, he was a scholarship student and right through he was an extremely hardworking student. He had no interest in games or sports but was waiting impatiently to get into a profession.

Soon, he completed his high school and again won his scholarship to go to the engineering school where they trained Civil Engineers. It was not an Engineering College as we think of today, but where the nuts and bolts of the profession were adequately taught leaving improvement and advancement to the ability of the individual student.

Contrary to what is being propagated today about the Dogra rulers of Kashmir, they were in fact extremely progressive and brought modern education to the valley along with the new Lingua Franca, the English language. It was during Maharaja Ranbir Singh's reign that the need was felt for having trained staff to man civil engineering projects and irrigation works. For this, the Maharaja started a polytechnic, which was appropriately named Ranbir Polytechnic. It was here that he got trained and passed out with flying colours as a scholarship student. In later years, people would point to him and say that "Without crossing the Banihall, he became an engineer."

In those days, the initial appointment was as a Sub Overseer. This was the initial job given to train people who did not have a degree from an Engineering College, but were otherwise adequately technically trained. The next post was Overseer. Today, this corresponds to what is called a Junior Engineer.

The day he passed out, Grandma (we grand children called her Kakni) heaved a sigh of relief. She was sure now that her son would soon be employed. From our grandmother's side we were related to the family of Raja Hari Krishen Kaul and with a qualified candidate it was easy to put in a word and get the job.

Raghu Nath Sapru was a dedicated man who took life very seriously as all the children in the joint family realized. He had no use for entertainment and leisure activities. He was a true karmayogi who did his duty sincerely towards his family including half-baked products like his and his brother's children.

After his appointment, his mother made plans to get him married and selected a girl from the Kaul (Bagh) family of Rainawari. She was Raj Rani Sapru and she presided over the joint family for many years after her marriage. Meanwhile, her mother-in-law had one more hurdle to cross and that was her younger son who was a total contrast to his elder brother.

Mahadeo Sapru was a peculiar combination of the middle class and an ambitious young man who wanted to get ahead in life. However, he was susceptible to distractions like any other young man of his generation could be. He had a colourful personality and would easily impress people by his command of the language, both Urdu and English. He had a taste in fine arts such as Music, Poetry and even games. He played hockey, broke his arm once and was, in short an exuberant young man.

Once when he was studying for his second year in college he made a spelling mistake in an essay, which was otherwise excellent. The lecturer to express his extreme annoyance gave him zero out of ten and that incensed this student of FA (in those days the first two years of college were called FA for Arts and FSc for Science) . He soon made up his

mind that continuing his education was no good and would not help him. He decided to qualify himself as an engineer and set about searching for a subject and an institution.

Money was, of course, a problem but by then his elder brother was the confirmed bread winner of the family and the family decided that he should go to Calcutta to study Wireless Engineering. This was in 1929. Prior to this in 1926 after he finished his FA he was married to Padmavati Kaul of Ali Kadal, daughter of Pandit Raghu Nath Kaul , a retired Customs official.

On arrival in Calcutta, he discovered the unpleasant fact that he had no interest in Wireless Engineering and promptly switched to learning shorthand and typing which was a short duration course compared to Engineering and returned home in time to witness the 1931 riots in the Kashmir Valley. At that time, he was given an opportunity of service and was employed in the Prime Minister' s office for a while and subsequently in the Police Department, which he served till 1947.

Many years later, when he was enjoying his retirement, he once told me about how disciplined and strict Kakni Sonamal (Grandma) was towards him, her younger son although in her heart of hearts she had a soft corner for him. As explained earlier, by temperament Mahadeo Sapru was an individual with fine tastes and interested in music, drama, arts, games and other finer things of life.

“Once there was a music performance in Srinagar that we call ‘Gyaivun’ and I had gone to see this performance. Mind you, I was already married by this time and could be considered a full fledged adult. I had mentally promised myself to go home by 9.00 p.m but soon forgot the promise and finally woke up when the performance was over at 10.30 p.m. In those days, there were very few street lights though I knew my way. I finally reached home at 10.45 p.m.

“At that time, my brother was posted at Handwara and there was no other male member in the house. As soon I knocked the door, I expected my wife to open the door. It was my mother who did and as soon as I stepped in the house, she slapped me hard on the cheek. I was shocked beyond words but what she said was still worse. “

“If something happens to you, who will go out to look for you? Do you expect me to do that ”. And with that, she marched to her room and I was left, a highly chastened man who had learnt his lesson the hard way.”

The two brothers were a contrast in temperament and taste and the eight children in the joint family instinctively were afraid of “Babatathu”, the elder and would prefer to approach “Toth”, the younger. In summer, quite often Uncle used to get up early in the morning and bang at all the doors waking everybody up with the words “

“Get going and do your morning ablutions“.

Very often my father in whose room I used to sleep would shake me awake with the words “Get up Quick Babatatha is calling you”.

As we children grew up and were able to discuss and mildly criticize some of the sayings of our parents, the one thing that has remained over the years in our minds is that “He would talk about what Chief Engineer Khan said, this and that and he would talk about what Peel Sahib and Bell Sahib said “ On rare occasions, when everybody would sit together for the evening meal the two would talk and we children would simply be seen and not heard.

All through our childhood, the children were made conscious of the fact that the Sapru family name was famous and noble and we were expected to live up to the standards of our forefathers. In this connection, very often we heard a name – Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and we had a vague idea that we were somehow related to him. Whether we are or not, the fact remains that a Sapru anywhere in the world shares the same Gotra with every other Sapru.

Years later, when I was an experienced field correspondent, many in Delhi would ask me whether I was related to the Saprus of Allahabad. My answer would be “ No, but we are country cousins”.

Discipline at home

Learning to tell the truth is a part of any child’s education. What he or she learns at home becomes his equipment to face the rigours of life.

Two small events come to my mind. After I recovered from an illness, my father purchased a bottle of horlicks out of which I would get one spoon mixed with milk every morning. After a few days my brain began to scheme as to how I could reach the sweet powder and eat it. The tin was placed on top of a high cupboard, which with my three feet height I could not reach. But being resourceful, I dragged the stool and managed to grab the tin and swallow the few spoons of powdered horlicks before putting it back.

I thought I was safe. But next morning I was caught. I knew that I was going to get a beating but surprisingly my father suddenly gave me an option,“ Tell the truth, admit your mistake and then I will not beat you.” I did it and escaped the beating but in the process learnt a lesson for a life.

On another occasion, my father had purchased a thermometer, which was at that time a rarity in our home. It was always opened by him, used for any member of the family who was sick and put back. I was always curious about it and wanted desperately to handle it. The opportunity came and I did it ,but fear of discovery made me nervous and I took the thermometer in my hand to the bathroom where it slipped out of my nervous fingers and broke. I was in jitters, put the broken thermometer into its case and put it back and waited for the punishment. Here too justice was merciful and I escaped punishment and remembered the earlier occasion. Needless to say, these were my only forays into petty crime and lying.

Life In Winter – Snow And Sleet

Life in winter in the Kashmir Valley was indeed difficult and misery was the watchword.

The three parts of winter namely Chellay Kalaan, Chellay Khord and Chellay Bache together formed the most severe period of the rigours of winter. Today, most housewives even in the Kashmir valley would be horrified if they were to be asked to do without cooking gas, kerosene stove, heaters and pressure cookers. But women in those days had to bear the brunt of shortages which were treated as something which one had to live with.

One has to remember that the concept of the *bukhari* (it is a big metal pot in which wood or coal is burnt and it generates heat for the entire room) was not prevalent or known in the Kashmir valley. One could see bukhari only in Government offices and other prominent places. The only means of heating was and is the *Kangri*. This is a native fool proof method of personal comfort.

A *Kangri* is by definition a mobile personal heater for a person. It has a cane handle and the outer body is made of cane to ensure that the user did not burn his hand. The inside portion is an earthen bowl in which usually coal is burnt and it produces enough heat to keep the man in less discomfort. Often, one can see on the roads people wearing long loose gowns called *pheran* with a slight bulge which signified that he is carrying a *Kangri* under the cover of his *pheran*.

In the last hundred years, the climate has changed very much in the valley. Earlier, the winter used to be very severe. Very often, six feet of snow would fall not only in the village but also in the city of Srinagar. The snow would block the door of the house and the fear of being locked up inside kept people awake at night. In fact, for many years one member of the family would remain awake and keep a spade handy so that if too much of snow fell, he would shovel and clear the path from the door to the lane or the road.

The worst part of living in such conditions was that the housewives had to, in freezing cold, fetch water from the tap sometimes quite near and sometimes far from the house. Those living near the rivers and the streams would also have to trudge in mud, sleet and very often over ice to fetch *a not* (a traditional round shaped pot for water). It was worse for Pandit women in villages.

Once the snow starts falling, it is easy to walk on it. Once it stops snowing, the snow on the ground gets hard and turns into ice and God help you if you are careless in walking over it. It has no shape, it has all kinds of shapes and which is the best and the easiest way to get a broken ankle. Added to this problem is that of movement through lanes and by lanes where the traffic is less unlike on the road where constant march of feet would flatten the road, and make things easier for the pedestrian.

The next danger was from Shisharghant (icicles). They are of two types. One where snow forms into ice and due to forces of gravity perhaps points from the edge of the roof towards the ground. In fact, it is shaped with a broad base and keeps narrowing as it comes down. There was always danger of it falling on an unsuspecting person walking on

the road or in the lane or under the roof of the house. There is another type of Shisharghant which develops in the opposite direction and the narrow point is pointed upwards. These are usually found in caves and mainly outside cities. Scientifically speaking, the one that points from up to down is called *Stalagmites* and the one that points from bottom to top is called *Stalagmites*.

When Grandma passed away

“ She was my grandma and her name was Sonamal but we children called her Kakni ”

The winter of 1951 was really severe and we were enjoying our winter vacation. In the rest of India, the longest vacation that the students enjoy is the summer vacation, but in Kashmir students need the longer vacation in winter.

Grandma was sick and fortunately her elder son, my uncle, was in Srinagar but her younger son, my father was away in Amritsar working as Food Procurement Officer of the Jammu and Kashmir Government in Punjab. Grandma was under the treatment of a good doctor but even we children could sense that her end was near.

The doctor came at 6.00 p.m. it was already dark. He examined her, gave her medicine and left without a word. She went into a coma and started addressing her elder son as her younger son. Disjointed words pointed to the fact that she wanted both her children by her side but it was not to be.

She died at midnight and by morning a telegram had been sent to my father. But try as he might he could not come since the road route was blocked by snow and there was no air service due to bad weather. He wired back that he could not come.

Many years later he told me how he felt at the death of the only parent he knew and had. “ The only thing I could do was to fast for the day but carry on working. I calculated when the 10th day would be and the 13th day would come and on those days would go the temple. This I did.”

But to get back to the morning of the funeral Myself and my cousin both 11 years of age were given the task of informing our relatives about Grandma’s death. The farthest point we had to go to was on one side Ali Kadal and on the other side Sathu Bar Bar Shah and Rainawari. We too had to go with our clogs and wearing our pherans, we started out on to the lane, which led to the main road.

Between our house and the main road a distance of about 300 yards we slipped on the ice at least three four times and once the Kangri which both of us carried practically overturned on our thighs and would have burnt us had we not been quick enough to get up.

On and on we went to reach our destination, delivered the message and were back at home in three hours. Just goes to show you how difficult transport was in those days and without two legs one could never survive especially in the hellish winter of Kashmir.

Strangers To Luxury

While radio was admittedly a luxury which made its appearance in Srinagar in limited quantities around the year 1946, luxuries in our locality were few and far between. The only sample of modern technology in our house was this cycle which in those days was not only considered a luxury and an asset to have, but it was also not called cycle. It was called “BICYCLE” and on a rough estimate of over seventy five thousand Pandits in Srinagar hardly 15 or 20 had this new method of locomotion.

As a child grows beyond ten years of age, especially a boy, galloping towards teenage, he starts dressing himself and generally becomes conscious of his appearance. In those days, barbers used to go to the houses of the rich. But the poor had to sit in his open shop on the ground for him to cut their hair. At that time, the current fashion was to cut the hair all-round short with a little bit left longer in the front. We called it “Bichur” and every boy of that age would insist on having a hair cut of that nature.

I remember crying my eyes out when I was not given the Bichur haircut while my elder Hreday got it. But after the deed was done, nothing could be done, but I resented it for a long time.

As we grew older, we became conscious of a new thing called filim and a new place called talkie. The name has come from when cinema made its apperance all over the world. The original name was Bioscope. Later on, it continued since it was only visual. And later on that period was called the silent films era. When sound was added to the visual, the place of exhibition was called talkie because one could hear sounds. Subsequently, it was named cinema.

The first cinema in Srinagar was the Palladium Talkies. In fact, the word talkies were written along with its name for a long time on its frontage. Among the younger generation the word cinema was whispered because in our value system then, going to the cinema was an evil thing to do. We heard elders discussing among themselves Mr.X whose son was seen going into or coming out of Palladium Talkies.

As time passed, gradually attitudes changed and we used to discuss new films without having seen them. If one of our friends saw it, the whole group would know the story line and by then radio had started becoming fairly common. In the early 50s Radio Ceylon’s commercial service broadcast songs from latest Hindi films. Thus, we would hear the songs either from the neighbours house or from the paan shop on the road which would be blaring out the songs especially at the time when we would be returning from the school.

In the absence of pocket money, many of the boys would skimp, beg, borrow and steal coins and when he reached the magic figure of seven and a half annas which was the lowest ticket available to enter the Palladium Talkies., he would be in the seventh heaven. Those who managed to collect the money, would always go for the 3.30 show because they had to be home before dark. However in our family, there was no question of going to cinema as there was no money. We only listened to other boys with our mouth open as they recounted the adventure of getting the ticket, going into the darkened hall and sitting on wooden benches and guarding your seat so that some Hanji boy (boat man's son) who were sturdy and stronger than Pandit boys, would not occupy the bench seat.

Apart from this, one instance will illustrate the security phobia of the Pandit. Earlier it was mentioned about how my mother as a bride had to wear a burqa to hide her face when coming for the first time to her husband's house. As late as 1946, physical security of the women folk was a primary concern for the family. And growing up girls were not allowed go out of the house. They had to be protected at all costs.

Once we were playing and this must have been in our psyche. Hriday, Jagan, myself were playing. Our youngest sister, who must have been barely three or four years old, insisted on playing with us. We were playing our own version of cops and robbers. And we had a big bed sheet over our heads and we were trying to protect our house against attack.

But overriding factor seemed to have been to protect Kanta first the youngest baby sister. And the cry was "Hey, we should hide Kanti Nath". The Nath attached to her name by us was to bring in line with our three names which all had the word Nath as our middle names.

The only piece of luxury that I can remember from my childhood is a gramophone with a manual charger. I was told that when my father had purchased it, none of us children were allowed to touch it. It was a great novelty and all the eight children except the eldest daughter who was by then already married, would have our mouths open looking at this marvel which produced beautiful music and songs.

In the early and middle 20th century, a wall clock had become a normal fixture in middle class homes but, we were more or less strangers to the wall clock. It was only when my uncle bought an alarm clock to wake us up early and get ready in time for school, that we became familiar with the time proclaiming itself from the shelf on the wall where it was perched. When uncle bought his first wrist watch and the first one in the family, I stared at it and wanted desperately to touch it.

Reverting to the cycle and its impact on our life, it was the sole conveyance of the family. It must be said here that until the late seventies, most people in Srinagar walked. After all, most distances either to the school or to the office or to the hospital or the main market were on an average not more than five kilometers away. Only the few affluent could afford to move around in tongas. All five of us children learnt how to ride a cycle on that good old British made Hercules. Being the two youngest ones, I and my cousin Jagan used to sneak out of the back garden gate along with cycle on Sundays when this

two wheeler had a holiday. In front of our house, two hundred yard away was a newly laid road appropriately named Nai Sarak. On this road, I must have fallen at least more than a dozen times. But the amazing part of that is that I never suffered an injury which would be visible at home for which I would receive a beating. On one occasion, I fell into the big open drain which even today is opposite to the Kotru and Pandita houses located there and hopefully now also on the Nai Sarak.

On the subject of my family, I have referred earlier in this narrative to my father and my uncle. They were two brothers each with his distinct personality perhaps influenced by their respective but totally different jobs. .

While the elder one was very serious in his approach to work and life, one suspects through great many hardships and privations in his effort to come up, the younger one was playful, and tended to be at times mischievous. He played football and hockey and in one altercation with a member of the opposite team broke his left arm.

When he was in college, he got the urge to play badminton. This was around the year 1920-21 .and to prove it we have an old photograph which he must have taken in the first commercial studio in Srinagar. Pandit Vishwanath of the company of the same name was in fact the pioneer of commercial photography in the Kashmir Valley. He was a student of the Mission School and greatly influenced by Biscoe Sahib. Years later, my father's interest moved to music and for a period of nearly 10 years he played the sitar, which he carried with him to Amritsar when he was posted as Assistant Trade Agent of the Jammu and Kashmir Government in Punjab.

One can only sum up. While poverty is our constant companion, it has its moments of glory when ordinary things become sought he totally forgot the class and became completely absorbed in the antics of the snake and of its master.

Radio Dialogue

On the day Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated in 1948, the news was broadcast by All India Radio and most adults in the neighbourhood of the Darbari clan house went to the good professor's room to hear the details. We, kids, did not understand except that Mahatma Gandhi had been killed. We trailed behind the adults and stood in the doorway as the sober, somber voice of Melville D'mello came over the Radio announcing that the funeral of the Mahatma would take place the next day and that AIR would broadcast a running commentary.

As the radio went silent our Professor suddenly shouted at it "Kar?" What he meant was at what time the next day which the announcer had not given. There was pindrop silence, some giggles and a few snickers.

For years after this incident, people would say "Kar?" and smile at each other.

Angreess Ball (British Ball)
Vilayati Hoon (English Dog)

For the children of that age and generation entertainment was mostly self made. Most of them belonged to families where it was always a hand to mouth existence. Yet, appearances had to be maintained. Clothes might be old but they had to be washed and pressed even though many holes would have been repaired diligently by the housewife. Quite often, food was kept overnight, since it was precious and eating the previous day's food the next day was quite common. One of the most common was "Bathe Thi Kaenz".

Normal expenses left very little spare cash for buying either toys or sports items for the children. Cinema was in its infancy all over India and Kashmir. In fact, the valley got its first cinema in Srinagar in the thirties. It was the Palladium and for a long time this was the only cinema in the entire city. Subsequently, it was joined by the next one Regal and immediately there after independence by Amrish. While Palladium was located just on the Lal Chowk where it is still is but in a ramshackle condition, practically ready for demolition. The other two namely Regal and Amrish are located on the Residency Road and the place is also known as the Regal Chowk.

Social values were such that going to the cinema was considered to be a crime and any one seen by his relatives or friends coming out of or going into the Palladium Talkies, the news would spread like wild fire and stories would be spun behind the unfortunate person's back. Apart from that, there was the question of money. Pocket money for children which is taken for granted today was unknown. Once a boy, who heard a classmate in school mention the words pocket money and saw the boy spending it on sweets, hesitantly raised the subject at home was given a tongue lashing. "Bathe Yed Chai Phatan" (Your belly gets filled up).

The obsession was centered around studies. For the children, especially boys, the game plan was to do well, aim for the best and manage with what he could get. For the girls, till as late as the fifties, education was a luxury and many of the older sisters in the family remained illiterate while the younger ones were lucky enough to get the benefit of education. Thus, the moment the father came back from work, if he saw the son idling away, he would get annoyed with him and in most cases give him a beating. So, there was hardly any time or opportunity to play.

One of our cousins was the only child of his parents and he had purchased for him a ball. This he naturally brought down into the Aangan and all the children wanted to play with it. While we were playing with it, we made sure that it did not go over the wall into our neighbour's house, which was at a slightly lower level. As the heat of the game intensified, one of us kicked the ball and we watched with our hearts in our mouths as the ball curved gracefully and was about to fall into the neighbour's garden. At the last minute, due to some freak alteration of one of Newton's Laws of Motion, the ball did not fall on the other side but on our "branda" (porch) We heaved a sigh of relief and that brought forth famous last words on the subject.

"This is an Angreess ball. That is why it did not fall on the other side. It is a special ball my father has bought me".

The same boy pestered his father for a dog. His father was posted at a police station in Rainawari. He tried to divert the boy's mind, but the child was adamant. So after the futile effort to dissuade the boy, he asked one of his constables to get a stray dog, tie a rope around his neck and pretend that it had been purchased from the market.

When the boy saw the dog, he was happy and the dog was put in a boat and brought home. En route, the canine felt like having a bath and the constable accompanying the boy allowed it to jump out of the boat and swim along the boat for sometime. The boy was thrilled that he had a dog who could swim while he himself could not. The father sitting back in his office was worried sick because he knew that his wife would not tolerate a dog in the house.

Eventually, the dog and its young master reached home and he lost no time in announcing it to us children in the Sapru compound. And the piece de resistance of his declaration was "It is an Angreez Hoon. You know he can swim" Poor boy, he did not know that all dogs can swim.

Having pets was unknown. Only the rich and the famous could do that and even there within the seven bridges there was hardly anybody among the Pandits who had a pet dog. This idea was brought forth by a few Kashmiris whose ancestors had migrated during Aurangzeb's rule to other parts of India and whose descendants had distinguished themselves in Civil Service and been employed by His Highness Government. Animals were not taken into the house and leather was totally taboo. Shoes had to be left outside and gradually a passage was designated for leaving the shoes.

Our generation which grew up in the forties of the 20th century played "guli danda" which was obviously imported from Punjab. In our local dialect, it was called "Lathkinj Loth". Usually the big stick bat (danda) and the small "guli" were made by carpenters as they were finishing any work for our parents and we would beg them to make. Usually, they obliged.

“Kaisi Achi Hai”(How nice she is)

It was Mission School at Anantnag and the two brothers were studying there. Their father was posted at Khanabal in the PWD.

The younger one was a boy of poetic nature with a fine sense of appreciation of the beautiful things of life and he had been watching for days together a little girl who was practically of the same age as he perhaps was in the single digit phase.

One day, he was standing in the school ground as a bunch of girls including the object of his admiration passed by. He couldnot restrain himself and said these famous last words: “Kaisi Achi Hai”

This was heard by someone who carried the tale and spread the news. It became big news and reached the teacher who immediately ordered the culprit to be produced before him for punishment and advised others to beware.

Similarly, as often happens, there are all kinds of catty comments about teachers behind their backs. In this case, the children had also made up a profane couplet which they kept on chanting before the teacher came.

“This plus this is Jagirkakin -----“

While chanting it in a class with the teacher absent, it was just nice amusement and our artistic hero’s elder brother also in his enthusiasm started chanting this chant.

The leader of the choir was a mischief-maker and stood directly in line with the door to the classroom. He could see the teacher coming and promptly sat down while the other did not notice and was caught red handed while shouting the profane poem..

Of course he was punished, while the instigator escaped.

Just at the time when the boy was supposed to accompany him, the father could not find him. Looking all over the place, he finally traced him to the toilet. Patiently, he waited and once the boy was ready father and son went out together.

On the way, the father smothering his annoyance, explained the paradox of time and place, opportune and inopportune to his young son thus:

Once upon a time there lived a hunter. One day, he was searching for prey. Whole day he searched he could not find anything. He was getting hungry and his dog accompanying him was also feeling listless. Just as dusk was falling and he had given up getting any animal to fall to his bow and arrow, he saw a deer in the distance.

Instantly, he whistled for his dog but there were not response and by the time the dog trotted upto his master, the deer had vanished and the hunter was angry. The dog had let him down at the right time. “

“Out of this has come the proverb, ‘ Kute nu shikar vale hagnu aya’ (At the time of the hunt the dog was otherwise occupied with)”

That is the moral of this story.

A Ruse To Save The Logs

What do you do, when you know that without help you cannot save your property and will surely lose it. All the hard earned money going down the Vitasta. And that is precisely what nearly happened many years ago to these two brothers Raghu Nath and Mahadeo Sapru. After both the brothers had got married and had jobs, their mother felt they needed a bigger house and for that land was first to be purchased.

In front of our old ancestral house, was the land of our cousins who had built their house at Safa Kadal. Though physically they had shifted from Narpirastan, their land was still next door to us and it made sense for us to buy it from them. They were also two brothers Pandit Arjun Nath Sapru and Pandit Radha Krishen Sapru. After the usual negotiations, the land was brought and gradually building materials was acquired and construction started in the late thirties and continued into early forties.

Our story takes us to the time when my uncle purchased wood for the woodwork to be done for making doors and windows in the house. For this massive logs purchased in Baramulla were floated down the Jhelum to be taken out at Razdan Yarbhal.

On the day the logs arrived at Razdan yaar-bal, the boatmen tied them together with ropes and left for their homes. Unfortunately, the river was in spate and the pressure of water broke the tightly knit grouping of logs. A man came running to the house and Mahadeo Sapru rushed to the river bank and began shouting at the top of his voice:

“ Razdan Sahib’s logs are being washed away. Somebody come and help Somebody come and help “

Hearing the name of the celebrity of the locality, all the boatmen who were sitting and eating the dinner in their dhoongas, came rushing and within minutes the logs were securely tied.

The crisis over, the ruse worked and the logs were saved. But next morning the boatmen found out who the real owners of the logs were.

14

Family Saga-2: The Romance Of Durbar Move

It was during the rule of Maharaja Pratap Singh that the Durbar Move became a regular Government activity and not just an annual move by the ruler of the State to escape the cold harsh winter of the Kashmir Valley for six months. Geographically, Kashmir valley is in the middle of a range of the Himalayas and Jammu is in the plains. After, it became one entity, a state in 1846, the Jammu and Kashmir state, it was necessary to pay equal attention to both regions. Durbar move, was a device to keep people of both regions happy.

Practically half of the Pandits employed in the various departments of the State Government used to move in November from Srinagar to Jammu and the Secretariat would function from there, leaving a skeleton administrative staff in Srinagar. Because of the valley being snow bound during six months of the winter, hardly any activity took place there. So practically every Pandit family had one member at least going to Jammu for the winter and the refrain among the housewives was that the "Durbar Move is coming and we are going to Jammu".

It was a romantic adventure, a change and a new experience for the housewives. They would meet different people and pick up a few words of Dogri and Punjabi. They would also get a chance to study the eating habits of the people of Jammu and I suspect that the first Pandit valley housewife who saw a chapathi must have seen it and tasted it in Jammu along with Dal both of which were practically unknown as the staple food was rice and hak in the valley. However, the number of wives going to Jammu was very small.

For the children, it was a series of daily doses of excitement just to get ready for the Durbar Move which in the early days was a two and half day journey by a bus over nearly two hundred miles of a road hewn out of the sides of a mountain in the Pir Panjal range.

A word about transport. After 1892, when the arch at the highest point on the Pir Panjal was built by a British Engineer and mistakenly called the Banihall Tunnel, roads began to be laid down to cater to the needs of people using that newly developed magic vehicle called the automobile. Initially, the only automobiles seen were those either owned by the Maharaja or by the few Englishmen serving in his Government or a visitor coming in from British India especially the province of Punjab.

Emulating other princely states like Mysore, Travancore, Hyderabad, Baroda, the Kashmir Maharaja also ordered the laying of roads especially on the trunk routes over which horses and tongas used to ply. By the early twenties, an urgent need was felt to

have a regular transport service during summer months from Srinagar to Jammu and other important towns of the state.

There was at that time all over India a gradual expansion of modern transport and a new business was developing in terms of providing point-to-point bus service over fairly long distances. Initially, as in civil aviation, so in surface transport, the first move towards commercialization was carrying of mails from point to point. In the case of Kashmir, it was Messrs N.D.Radhakrishan & Company that were the first mail carriers and pioneered transport in the valley. They carried mail to various points in British India like Rawalpindi and later on Jammu. The first one was on the Jhelum valley route which was an all weather road that was cut off in 1947. The other route across the Banihall was usually open for six months.

Initially, the only access to the rest of India from the Kashmir Valley was through the Jhelum Valley Road (J.V.Road) ,where the last point to cross was the Kohala Bridge across the Kishenganga River.From there a road to Rawalpindi was open along with the Rail Link. In the Jammu region, from which Kashmir Valley was cut of during the winter months, a new link was established to the railhead at Sialkot in Punjab. This line was subsequently extended up to Jammu.

Thus the British and the state administration largely depended on these two routes for to and fro movement with British India. One suspects that had the Dogra rulers not held Jammu, the Banihall Cart Road (B.C.Road) would have remained a dream. While trade and industry utilized the Jhelum Valley Road, there was initially hardly any traffic on the B.C.Road. However even the J.V.Road would get blocked by snow whenever there was heavy snowfall on the Murree Hills.

The B.C.Road now called the Srinagar – Jammu National Highway was originally built as a private Cart Road for the Maharaja of Kashmir in 1913 and was completed by 1915. Since it was only meant for and utilized by the Maharaja and his retinue, it would by sheer lack of use fall into disuse. At the urging of his advisers, Maharaja Pratap Singh threw open the road to the public in 1922 and it was only this which encouraged the passenger and goods traffic to expand and use this road.

It was indirectly and directly the result of the Pakistani invasion of Kashmir that spurred the Central and the State Governments to improve, this road widen it, and construct a proper tunnel at the top of the Pir Panjal Mountain, leaving the old arch (Mistakenly called tunnel) as a spare standby tunnel for an emergency. The construction of the new tunnel was started 2000 feet below the old arch.

Construction was entrusted to a Swiss Consortium Messrs Karl Kunz and Company, which started its work in 1953 and the tunnel with two lanes for to and fro traffic was inaugurated by the then Vice President of India Dr.S.Radha Krishanan in 1956.

In a short span of 25 years (1922-1947), the traffic rose from a few hundred tongas and

other horse-drawn vehicles to 3,000 trucks annually. Today, more than 2,000 vehicles a day in summer and 1,500 a day in winter ply on this road

During the pre 47 era, the most prominent bus transporters were Messrs Allied Charag Din & Sons who pioneered the Jammu Srinagar bus service. At the time of partition, they decided to migrate to Pakistan and thereafter others came into the fray.

It is reported that it was Sardar Attar Singh who started one of the first passenger bus transport companies. One thing definitely known is that Sardar Attar Singh had been the "Governor of Kashmir Valley". This designation was actually that of the Deputy Commissioner or the Collector, as he was known in British India then.

So Sardar Attar Singh and Sons started the Bus Service and later on another company by the name Amjit Limited was also floated. In the forties, another company called the Suraj Bus Service was also in operation. Subsequently another private company floated on or about 1947 called the Kashmir Tourist Bus Service Ltd., Simultaneously, after Independence, the State Government also started a Bus Service.

One more family business belonging to the Nandas (today associated with the Escorts Group) also started a service in the fifties to and from Jammu & Kashmir, which was, known as "Nanda Bus Service". Prior to that, Haji Charag Din & Sons operated their bus services for both passenger and freight in the state connecting Jammu with Srinagar and other places like Anant Nag, Phalgam, Baramulla, Sopore etc.,

Most of the buses were twenty to twenty-five seaters and powered by Bedford Engines. Most of the pioneer drivers were Sardars and to tell the truth it was not just a journey but an adventure when anything could happen.

In practically every family, there would be two brothers a married sister and the children. One brother and his wife and children would move to Jammu leaving the other brother and his family and grandparents in Kashmir. It was among the children that envy and jealousy surfaced because one group was going somewhere nice and interesting, while the other would be left in the miserable cold and "Khatkosh".

And thus came the great day, when on a cold drizzling November morning, I, accompanied by my father walked all the way from Narpirastan to the old Bus stand where our luggage and the womenfolk had already reached courtesy my father's friends. Actually, Shri Gopinath Kadalbijju and his wonderful intelligent and generous wife Danavati used to accompany my mother on such trips. Her husband used to work in the Central office along with my father.

It was a sight to see, to cherish and to remember with that "inward eye which is the bliss of solitude". My father walking wearing winter clothes and with a Police overcoat slung over his arm and me hanging on for dear life to his hand since the traffic on the road was increasingly thick with tongas practically scraping my side. The road was narrow in the forties. It still is.

And so we reached the bus stand. The ladies were seated first. The luggage was loaded. The ropes were tied and the driver arrived. He had obviously been briefed as to who his passenger was. So, more care and consideration. From the Bus stand as the engine note increased, we children were excited at the prospect and looked in wonder at the scenery unfolding. Of course, the children had monopolized the window seats.

Before we could practically settle down, we reached Khanabal and there on the road I saw my uncle. From a distance, I recognized him by his turban and his tall stature. The bus stopped and my father got down from the bus and had a brief chat with his brother. My Uncle "Babatatha" came and hugged me and off we went towards Qazigund. Just before entering the little town, we passed Pampore, Brijabhara and stopped at Qazigund.

Here the driver took the vehicle to the petrol station for filling up petrol. In those days, roughly fourteen gallons were needed to complete the journey to Jammu. It was fascinating for us children to see how petrol was filled into the tank of the bus. Two huge hefty men used to hold the handle sticking out of the pump and move it in a lateral direction to pump the oil into the petrol tank. The reason was that on the highway there was no light available to power the pump electrically.

We reached the base of the Pir Pinjal and began our laborious climb on the winding hairpin bends. From a distance, it looked like a number of snakes lying in a circular position with a sheen of snow white on top. At each hairpin bend, the driver would change gears and the engine note would alter into a high pitch as the bus would crawl its way up in second gear.

After a couple of hours of this torture, we children lost interest in the scenery and most of us fell asleep. Soon the bus crawled to a stop and opening our eyes we saw a long line of buses and trucks waiting to cross the tunnel. And that brings us to the profane language used by drivers and cleaners in their wordy duels and dialogues. Often, we heard the bigger boys shout "Handle Maro Sala, tunnel Jane ka hai Khyala". This was in the days of the yore when very little of new ideas and practices were imported.

One of the things that tested the mettle of the drivers and the cleaners was the problem of starting the engine in the absence of a self-starter, which came to India many years after it was developed and used in commercial vehicles in the West. The car engine used to be started with the help of the metal handle which when turned with sufficient force would in turn provide the movement for the fan belt to revolve and start the engine. It was for this reason that the majority of the cleaners had to be physically fit and strong to keep turning the starting handle.

We were told that it was a very long tunnel and it would be very dark inside and scary. As we went in, the driver wisely switched on his headlights, which lit the road ahead, the rocks on either side were irregular in shape and to my eyes it looked as if they were devils waiting to catch me. I was frightened but the warmth from my father's proximity helped to reassure me that no monsters would get me at least not in the bus. Finally a

long pencil of light pierced the darkness and we knew that we were coming into the bright light, which we did.

Soon we reached Udampur and from there to Nandini where a shorter tunnel has to be crossed but without any fear of monsters and devils. We were now rolling towards the plains of Jammu and finally reached our destination, safe and sound but tired and hungry.

Geography & Education

On the way to Qazigund, on one of our six monthly journeys between Jammu and Srinagar, I was sitting on the left window seat in the second row from the driver. Childish curiosity and a rumbling stomach made me ask my father as to how far the next station or stop was.

He pointed out of the window and said: "Check the milestone" he then leaned over me and pointed to a whitewashed stone on the side of the road on which the number had been written. Father explained that this indicated the number of miles (in those days we had not converted to the metric system),. we had travelled since we began our journey from Srinagar.

"We have to travel two hundred miles from Srinagar to Jammu and we have only five miles more to reach Qazigund. There we shall have something nice to eat", he smilingly promised.

Thus it was that I had a practical demonstration of distance calculation and a dose of arithmetic.

Today, what was known for almost a century as the Banihall Cart Road during the Dogra rule, eventually became vital link between Kashmir and the rest of India and Project Beacon of the Border Roads Organization (BRO) of the Army looks after the maintenance of this road which now has the impressive prefix of National Highway.

Life in Jammu

There was a qualitative difference in the life that Pandits led in Srinagar or some other places in the valley and the life that they led in Jammu. By virtue of geography, Jammu being in the plains had more interaction with Punjab than the people of the valley. Also the Dogri language is somewhat similar to Punjabi.

The winds of change that swept over British India, which included Punjab, brought about a certain kind of openness and freedom of movement among the people beginning with the thirties and the forties. Whereas in Srinagar the social interaction between Pandits and Muslims was restricted to a minimum (there was no interdining), in Jammu things were far more free.

Some of the customs and practices followed by the Pandits kept them in some ways totally insular. For instance, our eating vessels were totally separate. We drank tea out of copper cups called "Khos", a round shaped cup with a base at the bottom. We also ate on thalis and the cooking pots were also distinct. The only common thing we had with the Muslims of Kashmir was the Samavar, which was a pot for making tea self-contained with an in- built stove.

Another important factor was that there were no hotels and restaurants in the old parts of Srinagar in what is called today the down town area of Srinagar. Amira Kadal, the first bridge, was the area which could be considered posh and the Residency Road beginning from Lal Chowk was the area that had fairly expensive restaurants meant to cater to the tourist community, before 47 mostly Europeans and after 47 a mixed crowd of both foreigners as well as Indians who could afford the holiday.

It may however be noted that there were teashops catering to the Muslims. The nearest equivalent to this among the Pandits would be the Halwai shop where one could get milk and milk products as also fried pakoras etc. One important distinction has to be kept in mind and that is that the Muslims used Chinaware for drinking tea especially.

One more distinction has to be clarified and that is the issue of tea and tea drinking. In the Kashmir valley it is even today green tea that is drunk by most people at home. Due to severe winter and some other factors perhaps the tea was never mixed with milk. It was drunk with sugar alone. Today, the five star hotels of India are offering this and it is called, as it has been for centuries in the valley, the "Kahwa".

The peculiar thing about Kahwa is that it was considered to be the poor man's tea and none of the hotels and restaurants on the Residency Road would serve it in their dining rooms. The tea that was served was mainly made of leaves collected and processed by British companies like Brooke Bond and Lipton. In the public mind, this was promptly labelled "Lipton Chai". After independence, within the valley, the housewives began to store Lipton Tea in addition to the Green Tea.

This is in the nature of an aside to explain the sudden conferment as it were of freedom to the Pandits in Jammu to visit a Restaurant. Apart from the question of a Hindu Restaurant or a Muslim Restaurant in Jammu, there was a comparative freedom of choice. After the day's work, unlike in Srinagar, most Pandits used to stroll down the road from the Secretariat to the Raghu Nath Bazar and whenever they could afford would go into a teashop and have some "mathis" and some tea. Some of the more adventurous ones would go in for butter toast and tea (not available at home). Incidentally, the tea available

was only Lipton. Some of the religiously inclined would also go to the Raghu Nath Mandir and pay their obeisance to the god Lord Rama.

Poetic Justice

When making arrangements for going to Jammu at the time of the Durbar Move, every Pandit would have to think of reserving a place in Jammu where he would live either alone or with his family for six months. For those who would be taking their families, it was a more elaborate and difficult assignment. But for those who would not be taking their families, it was easy to join a few colleagues and hire a complete house instead of a few rooms.

In 1946, my father decided to take me with him to Jammu (my mother had died in 1945) and so three other colleagues of various other government departments joined together and decided to hire a cook so that there would be no problem of food. The other three were the usual run of the mill clerks but one of them was a singularly peculiar character.

This gentleman was a Maha Kanjus (terrible miser). As soon as we reached Jammu and the daily routine started, I was admitted to a school and had to get ready in the morning almost at the same time as the four adults. In the very first week, I noticed that this gentleman would wait for another member of the team to go for his bath and would rush to his bed, search under it, take out his small tin of polish and furiously use it to polish his own shoes. For a while it did not occur to me as to why he was doing it until I discovered that he did not own either the polish or the brush, which he could use to polish his own shoes.

There were other small incidents, which pointed to his being a miser. His roommate discovered that his polish was disappearing faster and whenever they went down to Raghu Nath Bazaar he would never pay the bill or offer to pay part of it. The result was that usually one of the other three would have to pay his share also.

There were murmuring about this and I heard the three adults sometime speaking against him. My father counselled patience and said that they would get their opportunity to teach him a lesson. One day, they went to a restaurant and while going, this gentleman swore that he did not have a pie on him, but unknown to the other three, he had a ten rupee note in his top pocket where he usually kept his glasses.

As they sat down and ordered, he expressed a desire to check the menu and ordered something different. The waiter brought the menu and to read it he put his right hand into the pocket to bring out the pair of glasses. As he did so, the ten-rupee note got struck to the arm of the glasses and fell out by the side under the table.

This was noticed by my father and a second person who tried to open his mouth and inform the owner. But my father was too quick and he stamped his foot under the table

and said, "What is the matter with you, keep quiet". So the other man kept quiet while my father stretched out his foot and carefully dragged the note towards him, bent down, picked it up folded it into a ball and put it in his pocket.

Now the other three saw it and everyone had a smile on his face. All this while the miser was selecting some choice items to eat for which he knew the others would be paying. At this point suddenly, my father became very generous and displaying unusual hospitality, persuaded the gentleman to order many more dishes.

The long and the short of it was when the entire feast was over and the bill came my father generously took out the ten rupee note and paid the bill which amounted to Rs. 9 – 12 annas. That left four annas, which was given as a tip to the waiter. When he saw the ten-rupee note, he realized that it was his note, but he could not say a word since he had earlier sworn that he had no money with him. A case of poetic justice.

'He Is A Communist'

I was too young to understand what Communism was, but our two eldest brothers already knew enough about Marx, Lenin, Stalin etc., and there would be discussions which went over the heads of we three younger ones but what brought the subject straight before us was an incident.

Our neighbour whose garden and house faced our front door was Pandit Narain Saraf a former Retired Customs official. It was a beautiful house and we would see the old gentleman daily moving about in his drawing room on the first floor. He had a son named Niranjana Nath Raina. (The difference in the two surnames can be explained as quite a few families even today sport two surnames). For instance, Raina and Razdan are supposed to be similar and there are other instances also of this duality.

One day in early November 1946, we suddenly saw police descending on the house and going in for what apparently seemed like a search. After sometime, there was total silence and later on we came to know that it had something to do with the activities of his son Niranjana who was locally known as "Nyari Saraf".

Apparently since communism was banned in the state, the police must have got instructions to arrest him, but he escaped. This happened in 1946 and after independence, he left Kashmir went to UK, did his doctorate in Physics, returned to Kashmir, worked as Professor of Physics in Kashmir University and retired as the Head of the Department and he is now living in Delhi.

But the effect of it on us children was profound. We thought, at least I thought, that Communism was some kind of an infectious disease.

Security Priority

Apart from the normal Muslim rule where each King or Sultan would get toppled by the other, they all had one point programme and that was to convert the entire population of the valley to Islam. In this they were successful. The only period when there was comparative peace and no forcible conversions was that of Sultan Zaina-Ul-Abadin also known as Badshah. However, the worst period was the seventy years of Afghan rule which commenced in 1753 during which Pandits were physically pushed into gunny bags alive, tied up and thrown into the Dal Lake because they refused to convert to Islam.

It was the darkest period for the Pandit community during which the numbers fell to just eleven families of survivors who hung on to their faith and ethos stubbornly. The only parallel instance that one can think of is the systematic ouster in modern times, is the murder, abduction, and rape of 1989-90. Although peace came during the Dogra rule, the Pandit psyche was never free from fear of physical harm. This was especially so with regard to womenfolk. In the early part of the century, you would hardly find any young girls or women walking on the roads. It was only after the Dogra rule got stabilized that there was law and order to the extent that women could move around safely. Batta Gajan

In the 14th century, Zulqadr Khan alias Dulch, a descendent of Changez Khan- his very name, like the sound of a hurricane, fills one with dread—with a force of 70,000 cavalry came from Trukistan and invaded Kashmir. During his depredations, which lasted eight months, he converted the people forcibly to Islam. Thereafter, he left for his native land via Khuri, taking 50,000 Brahmins as slaves. While crossing the Devasar Pass, a snow-storm occurred in which he, together with his own troops and the Brahmin slaves,perished. This place is since called Batta Gajan, meaning the Kashmiri Pandits' death-oven. (In Kashmiri, Batta means Kashmiri Pandit).

Even today, the older generation refers to Batta Gajan as one of the worst tragedies to hit the community. Imagine, if those 50,000 Pandits had not perished in that snow storm, today they would have been much more than 5,00,000 and the community would have been one million strong. This expression was used extensively in the 19th and the 20th centuries to signify any comparable tragedy. It got into the idiom and became a part of the language.

In the twenties, the Pandits had a peculiar custom, which died out immediately after the thirties. Brides when going to their in-laws for the first time in the company of their husbands had to have their faces covered especially if they were coming from an area in Srinagar city, which was suspect with regard to safety of women.

My father who got married in 1926 had a similar experience, which he narrated to me. "We had to go in a barat by boat from Razdan Yarbhal and go down the Jhelum to Ali Kadal and go ashore at Rishi Peer waterfront. After the wedding, the same boats carried

the bride and the bridegroom but with one variation. The bride though dressed in the current wedding clothing had put on a Burqa.

"But why a Burqa? What was the point?"

"This was a custom from almost one hundred years earlier when there had been cases of brides being kidnapped en route to their husband's house."

Security had become such a phobia with Pandits that even a women left alone at home during her husband's absence would ensure by precautions and even guile to convince the bad elements that there was a male member in the house. There was a story of a woman in our Mohalla who used to sit at the window in darkness and put on her husband's turban and smoke the hookah (Hubble Bubble) to give the impression that a man was in the house.

Football Saga

Actually, it was a short saga. You could even say it was not even a saga, but it did open a Pandora's box of memories that shot out of the brain box after a gap of fifty years. It happened like this.

I (The author), Hreday, and Jagan were desperately in need of a game to play. But we did not have either hockey sticks or a football. Somewhere along the line, (I do not remember how) we managed to get a reject from someone.

Yes, the football was our prized possession and our commander Hreday decided that we should play in the backyard but that was not allowed as my aunt had planted some hakh there. So we went to the front yard, but as soon as he gave it the first kick the football gave its last gasp. All the air hissed out of it and it became as limp as a dead cat.

The football was brought examined thoroughly by three experts and pronounced dead. Now arose the question of a reviving it to life. One worthy made the suggestion that since it had a hole in the neck we should go to the cycle repair shops at Malik Aangan. So off we trooped to the cycle shop but disappointment awaited us. He had gone home for lunch.

So from Malik Aangan we went to Razdan Kocha but there the shop was closed and onwards to Bana Mohalla. There too we drew a blank. Finally after Chinkaral Mohalla we found just after Sham Bhat's a cycle shop with the proprietor sitting idle.

We rushed, we explained, we showed the patient and we requested immediate restoration of the football to good health. He looked at all three of us and did not think we were creditworthy and told us in no uncertain terms that it would cost the grand sum of One Anna to repair the football. We looked at each other and decided to check our treasury. Low and behold, our fortune amounted to three paise (In those days for the information of the uninitiated or the young or the ignorant four paise made one anna)

Shamefacedly, we showed him the extent of our resources and just pleaded with our eyes. This is all we have, please do it. I suppose he felt sorry for us and agreed. We were very happy. We stood around. It was the main road leading to Habba Kadal and we were on the side of the road.

Just then we heard a lady's voice from behind and I saw for the first time in my life a woman on a cycle stopping in front of the cycle repair shop. I stared at her goggled and then I discovered that this cycle was different from other cycles. It had no handle bar. I whispered to Hreday. He said with the superior smile "Don't be stupid, that is a lady's cycle". My curiosity satisfied, I now watched to see what she wanted.

The cycle repairman had wished her and showed respect and then she was telling him about the problems of the back wheel of the cycle. She suspected that there might be a puncture, which the expert confirmed. So, without as much as by your leave, our work was set aside and the cycle became the priority.

We quietly watched and he sensed that we were impatient but he explained his philosophy. "For this small job of repairing the puncture, I am getting four annas and for your tough job I am getting three paise, see the difference" We meekly nodded our heads and tried to be patient.

Soon, the cycle was ready, the payment was made and the customer departed and our expert resumed work on our patient. Being highly experienced, he eventually fixed the defect and cured the malady after which he filled the football with air and to our delight it gave a very healthy sound of a bounce.

We looked at each other paid the money and did not stop until we reached home. And then we rushed into the yard and started playing but all the gods were against us. The moment the second kick of the ball materialized, it started raining. Frustrated we had to come with our precious ball and sit glumly on the verandah and watch and curse the rain.

But who was that lady, you forgot to ask? She was Ms. Lakhmi (Lakshmi) Rambal one of the first ladies in the valley to take up teaching.

Tiger, Tiger Burning Bright

The road was in an appalling condition. The vibration was shaking the bones of the lone passenger in the bus meant to seat 40 passengers but now completely empty.

It was the sweltering June heat of Punjab, the bus was going from Jammu to Pathankot. The driver was feeling the heat and had parted company with his shirt. The passenger promptly emulated him.

The passenger was the Assistant Trade Agent of the Jammu & Kashmir Government based at Amritsar and recalled to temporary duty at Pathankot. This was just the year after the Pakistani Invasion of Kashmir and there was a terrible foodgrains shortage in the valley. While the State Government did its best to mitigate the sufferings of the people, food relief came from other states and was stacked bag on bag at the railway station waiting to be loaded on trucks for transport to Srinagar.

And that is where the passenger of the bus was going – to Pathankot. Just a few miles after passing the border at Madhopur, the bus was going at a steady 30 KMPH and the passenger was dozing. Suddenly the driver saw lights, twinlights in the distance. All round the countryside it was pitch dark on both sides of the road.

He shook his passenger awake and said:

"Panditji, we are in trouble. Those twin lights are the two eyes of a tiger rushing towards us."

"Really, then what shall we do? Shall we stop, Shall we turn back".

"No Panditji, we shall fight him and we shall kill him."

"But with what? Have you got a gun?"

"No, I don't have a gun but I have this bus".

"I guarantee you Sir, that when he comes under the front wheel I shall twist the back wheel so that his neck comes under two tyres at the same time. That will finish him off".

"But how can you be sure of going over him. Suppose he turns away and comes at us from the window", his passenger voiced his fears and doubts.

"Don't worry, trust me, you will see".

All talk ceased, the driver concentrated on driving. The tiger was coming nearer and nearer with two pinpoints of his eyes lighting up like laser beams. Knowing that he would require every light in the dark, the driver put on his headlights at maximum beam and as they came closer to collision, the driver switched on additional lights, which blinded and dazzled the tiger.

At the first collision, the tiger was thrown back on his side and the front wheel went over his throat. While this was happening the passenger was holding on to the safety rods in front of his seat and the driver was wrestling with the wheel. Suddenly both of them had a crack. The tiger's neck was broken.

After he straightened the bus out on all four wheels and restored the balance of the vehicle, the driver laughed out loud and told his passenger.

"Panditji, we have killed us a tiger".

"But how can you be sure that tiger is dead. Let us stop and check".

There were about a hundred yards from the dark shape visible even at that distance. They took a few pebbles and threw them at the tiger. There was no reaction. The tiger was dead. Just at that moment, from the opposite side they could hear a tonga, they shouted at the tonga driver to stop and the driver went straight to look at the tiger asked the shocked passengers of the tonga to help him shift the carcass of the tiger from the middle of the road. This was duly done.

The driver reached Pathankot and parked his bus. The passenger took leave of him. End of adventure. End of Story. Not quite.

A year after this incident, the author then a wise young man of nine years was leaving a dhaba in the Shariexhpura locality of Amritsar. As we were leaving, two new customers arrived and one of them wished my father who instantly recognized him as the driver who had killed the tiger. A short conversation followed and we parted company.

"Did he really kill the Tiger?"

"Yes, he did "

"But how? Did he have a gun with him?"

"No"

"Were you with him"

"Yes"

"Were you scared?"

"Yes"

Total silence. We walked home and I thought of the tiger and for some reason I sympathized with the tiger. Why, I do not know.

Boot Polish, The Cure All

It was a cold November day and snowflakes were hitting the window panes as I sat with a Kangri under my pheran. It was a gloomy day. I could not play and there was nothing else to do. I hated the books and the homework. I was miserable, in short.

Suddenly, a ray of sunshine came into my life. My uncle barged into the room and told me to arise, awake and get ready to go out with him to the market. I was excited and I

fumbled with the buttons of my coat. Finally, we set out and the farthest we went to was Habba Kadal. On the way, the snow changed to sleet. Anyway, my uncle stopped at a shoe shop and announced to me his intention of buying me a new pair of shoes. Oh Boy, was I excited and thrilled. I tried several pairs and found one that fitted me. The usual bargaining began and after an interval of half an hour of intense bargaining the deal was struck, the money was paid and I became suddenly the affluent, proud owner of a new pair of shoes.

I clutched the box to my chest and followed my uncle back home. I didn't show the shoes to anybody, but rushed upstairs to try them on. I put them on and stared at the shining black topside where I could see my reflection in the shine of the leather. I could not go out to try it out, so I walked up and down in the corridor in the front of the room.

After sometime, I decided that I should not dirty the soles anymore and took off the shoes to examine whether I had dirtied them. I had. There were marks of dirt on what had been two shining soles. This was not good. I wanted my shoes to remain as good as new forever, but how to do it. I stared at the sole, I stared at the wall, and I stared at the door. No inspiration.

Finally, I looked into the shoebox where I found a new shoe brush and shoe polish. Idea. I would polish the shoes, I mean, the soles, and so I did and got caught. My uncle caught me polishing the soles of the shoes. My uncle who rarely would laugh especially with us children suddenly burst out laughing.

"Sooma, we don't polish soles of shoes. Soles are meant to become dirty. We walk with on them. We polish the top of the shoes. You can't keep your shoes new this way. Now be a good boy and put your shoes into the box.

Close to tears, I was hurt, puzzled and angry at this world. Why can't I keep the shoes new all the time. It's so unfair.

"Hey, Sooma, want to see Bansi's new ball. It's an English ball....."

I rushed out forgetting all the gloom of a few minutes earlier. Understandable. I was nine years old.

Monsoon Deadline

In 1948 – 49, the shortage of food and other essentials in the Kashmir valley was acutely felt. It was actually started by Pakistan before the October 47 attack when they stopped supplies coming through the Jhelum Valley Road.

Mahadeo Sapru had taken a year's furlough and was on his way to Singapore to take up a job, which had been offered to him by Sardar J. J. Singh who was then, the President of India America League based in the United States of America.

En route to Amritsar, he met Bakshi Gulam Mohammed, then Deputy Prime Minister of Kashmir who persuaded him at the Airport itself and actually forced him to cancel his trip to Singapore. Eventually, he was posted to Amritsar as the Assistant Trade Agent of the J & K Government in Punjab.

It was after some time, that he was designated at the height of the food shortage crisis as the Food Procurement Officer in which capacity he brought about the dispatch of foodgrains to the valley first by train up to Pathankot and from there by trucks to Srinagar.

Initially, his job was to ensure dispatch of good quality of grains from the various mandis(markets) of Punjab. As the dispatches increased, so did the big piles on the platform at Pathankot Railway Station. The local staff of the Trade Agency were trying their best but lack of organization and other shortages did not result in sending more than half a dozen trucks carrying grains to Srinagar daily.

At this point, Bakshi Gulam Mohammed turned up in Amritsar one day and gave an emergency order to my father to immediately go to Pathankot and clear all the grains lying there. At this time, he was accompanied by another Minister of the National Conference Government namely D.P. Dhar.

The reason for this was that it was already May and in just four weeks time, the monsoon would start and thousands of tonnes of foodgrains were lying out in the open and one shower of rain would render them unfit for human consumption. When he reached Pathankot, he found that the staff was totally inadequate and not equal to the job. Since he had been given financial powers as well, he took the bold decision of hiring thirty weighing centers and temporary staff to man them and keep accounts.

On a Monday morning, the work started from 6.00 a.m to 12.00 noon and from 4.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m. Compared with the earlier dispatch of six to seven trucks per day, he was able to send on the very first day 42 trucks. On the second, third, fourth and subsequent days he averaged seventy trucks. A stage reached when he had to call the Minister and tell him to send more trucks to carry the grain as he was facing a shortage of vehicles. It was tiring and exhausting work. Yet everyday, he could see the huge mountain of grains getting smaller and smaller. On June 8, several railway wagons arrived from Faridkot in Punjab, which were unloaded and added to the quantity to be sent to Srinagar.

On June 12, there were just about 30 truckloads left. He was taking a breather in the form of a cup of tea while every one was sipping cold soda and smoking beedies and cigarettes. He looked up at the sky. Dark clouds were gathering across the Northern sky and his assistants expressed fear that it might rain that night.

It did not and the work continued at a furious pace until June 15 when there was not a single bag of grain left on the Pathankot Railway Station Platform. He went to the Hotel had his dinner and went to sleep.

Thunder and lighting woke him up at midnight and the rain came down heavily as the heavens opened up. The rains had come but they had beaten the deadline. All the grain had reached the valley. A job well done.

Free Discipline Day

There was excitement in the air and we three talked about it at home. But the eldest among us did not condescend to join our conversation because the next day he, a student of class X, would become a teacher for a day.

So the next day dawned bright and clear, with the boys filling the school ground as usual. Soon after attendance, the "Free Discipline Day" began.

A word aside. This was the Central High School also called Mission School also called CMS School. It was also called Biscoe School. This was the name sometime used by the educated lot but the illiterate lot used to call it "Biscot Sahib's School". The virtual distortion of his name however did not worry or bother the founder Rev. Canon Biscoe.

He was responsible in a very large measure for introducing English language teaching in the valley and brought in many innovative practices into the school system. He introduced games and swimming as parts of the character-building programme, which produced some of the best from the valley.

In the mission school, he introduced a system whereby the older boys would learn how to lead and how to teach by giving them an opportunity to become adults for a day. And very rightly he named it the "Free Discipline Day".

Immediately after the bell rang, all the teachers disappeared from the scene and handed over the classes to students of the senior classes who had been selected earlier for this assignment. I and my cousin, were in the sixth class and it fell to our lot to have Hreday as our teacher for the day for that period.

What a contrast it was. It would seem as if Hreday was suddenly transformed from a youngster who played with us into a serious strict adult. To reinforce the image, he carried a scale with him and started lecturing without a preamble. There was a din, but he suddenly shouted and caned a few ringleaders in the front rows and soon a hush and then peace descended on the class and he seriously began teaching us some subject, which I have to my regret forgotten.

The transformation was complete. To my eyes, it seemed as if he had been a teacher for ever and with his eyes darting everywhere looking for mischief mongers, he looked every inch the epitome of perhaps Oliver Goldsmith's village school master or perhaps Mr. Chipps of James Hillton or a combination of both.

Soon the bell rang and the class was over and the teacher left. And some one else came in for the next class. The rest of the day is a blur in my memory, but that day I found out how an opportunity can change a personality.

Hreday is today holder of two Doctorates and a Professor of Neuro Medicine in New Jersey, U.S.A.

"Marm Time" (Morning Time)

In the whole of India, being a tropical country, summer holidays are the longest for the children. But in Kashmir, Himachal, Uttaranchal and the hill districts of West Bengal such as Darjeeling, it is not the summer holidays, which are the longest, but the winter holidays. In the Kashmir valley, the winter vacation would begin in late November or early December and end in mid February.

Many years ago, the people in the valley felt that the summer heat was intolerable of course, by valley standards. What the Kashmiris called hot was cool and pleasant in the rest of India. Somehow, the authorities decided that children should not be made to go to school during the hot summer days. Therefore, they introduced what was called Morning time.

Of course, the children called it Marm time and so did the housewives. It was a welcome change for the children to have to get up early and go to school at seven a.m. whereas they were used to going school normally at 10.00 a.m. But for them it was fun and there were other advantages. The school would close at 12.00 and they had plenty of time to play.

It is not quite clear whether the morning school timings were introduced in all schools in the valley, but I distinctly remember that they were indeed enforced in the Mission school at Fatehkadal.

As communication and information expanded, children gradually started becoming bold compared to their earlier shy and generally obedient nature. Generally most of them would listen as the teacher droned on whatever he was teaching. Questions were hardly asked, doubts were mostly unheard of and school was do as the teacher says. But there were certain boys who were exceptions to the rule. For instance, there was this bold young fellow from an affluent family who was caught by the teacher for not paying attention.

When asked what he was doing he replied that he was looking out of the window. The teacher out of sheer curiosity made the mistake of asking him as to what he saw that was very interesting. His reply has gone into the annals, but here it is for what it is worth. "Sir I just saw a beautiful woman, I was hoping I would get a wife like her" In Kashmiri, the nuances are far sharper. "Puraat hish zanane geshim -Would love to have such a robust, plump woman"

The Astrologer Was Right

Once upon a time, there lived a man who after 18 years of service decided to take one-year furlough. As he was leaving for his one-year vacation, he was stopped a little distance away from the place from where he had started. He was told that he had been recalled to duty. His leave was cancelled.

He worked in a far off place for years and then suddenly the Government decided that the post he held had become redundant. The post was abolished and our man was without a job but he had his right over his original job and it was expected that he would go back to it. Meanwhile, his daughter was getting married. He celebrated his daughter's marriage and was going to take a decision on his future.

On a sunny day, he started walking towards the office where he had worked earlier having now decided that he would go back to his original job. As he was passing through a locality(Zaindar Mohalla) where his family astrologer lived, he decided to pay him a visit. In traditional Hindu families in Kashmir, the family priest is also the astrologer and he casts the horoscopes of all those born in the families whom he serves. Normally, all horoscopes cast by him had duplicates, one copy for the person concerned and one for record kept by the astrologer in his own house.

After the initial greeting, our man asked the astrologer to have a look at his horoscope. The astrologer took a few minutes to glance through it and said:

"Everything is fine for the time being, there will be no change"

"But that is impossible. I have been relieved of my job. So, where is the question of my going back to the same job in the same place. There must be some mistake Jyotshiji".

"There is no mistake, you are going back to the same place to the same table to the same office. May be, you will be given the job of lifting stones like a coolie, but in terms of respect, prestige and salary you will be facing no change. You will be respected again as you were earlier. That is my final prediction. Please tell me when it happens".

There was no arguing with such a flat, determined, assertion. The man nodded paid him a little money and left his house. He started walking on the main road and a few minutes

later a car came fast from the opposite direction, almost passed him and suddenly screeched to a halt. The driver backed until it came abreast with the man.

Out stepped a senior civil servant who told him that the Chief Minister wanted to see him very urgently. He was bundled into the car and taken to the CM's Office.

"We have taken a decision to open a new trade organization and we have already set up showrooms in major cities and your city from where you have recently come is on the list. I want you to go forthwith back to Amritsar where you will use not only your former staff members but also the premises of your earlier office. I want you to leave tomorrow. There will be no change in your salary and entitlements. It will be as though you never left your previous job in the same place".

Our man was dazed. What the astrologer had said an hour back had come so accurately true that it was frightening. Needless to say, our man went and shocked his previous office staff who had just two weeks earlier given him a farewell party, by occupying the same seat that he had vacated two weeks earlier.

Island In The Sun

How accurate is astrology? Many have asked this question but few have answered it satisfactorily. Let us give you another instance.

There was this young man in his thirties working in an organisation. Ambitious yes, but he did not find an opportunity to fulfil his desire to go abroad. One fine day, he decided to apply for a scholarship or fellowship in America. Nothing happened, not even a rejection slip, then he gradually gave up dreaming of going up abroad and concentrated on improving his position in the company he worked.

Three years passed and one fine day a senior colleague persuaded him to come with him to a friend of his who was an astrologer. After the initial greetings, he asked for his particulars.

"What particulars"

"Your name, date and time of birth, place of birth"

He obliged and the astrologer asked him to come the following week on Sunday to hear about his future.

"By April 14, 1979, you will not be in India. You will live abroad for almost a year"

"But where will I go, can't you tell me". "I can't tell you the place but I can tell you what it will be like. You will be in a place which will be surrounded by water on all sides".

"Perhaps I will be marooned like Robinson Crusoe on an island", our young man said trying to be funny.

Of course, he thought it was a ploy by the astrologer to extract some money from him. Then he looked at the calendar it was December 1978. He thought to himself that it was only a few months away. He could check out the prediction. In any case, he did not believe what the astrologer said. He paid the customary fee and went away.

Several months passed, he forgot all about it. Then one fine day in February 1979 he received a letter from America selecting him for a fellowship in communication studies. At first, he couldn't believe it, and then he looked at the place from where the letter had come. It was the Honolulu Island in the Hawaiian Archipelago, so the second part of the prediction also seemed to have come true.

Once he was over the shock, he set about making preparations for going to America. His prepaid Air ticket arrived, but while he looked at the route and the places, he didn't notice the dates.

Came the great day when he flew from Bangalore to Madras, Singapore, Hong Kong, Tokyo and finally landed at Honolulu International Airport in the United States. He was a little dazed as he collected his luggage and suddenly his eye fell on the calendar hanging on the wall.

It was April 14, 1979 correct to the day, the date that the astrologer had predicted.

Against The Tide

I was fourteen and had just learned to swim in a safe swimming pool in far away Madras. I was back home for vacation. It was summer and all the children were frolicking around on the riverbanks all along the two sides of the Jhelum River. And I was also tempted to swim and show off my knowledge of swimming. It was at Razdan Yarbäl.

I waded into the river and could even near the bank feel the pressure of the waves. Close by there was a dhoonga and adjacent to it there was an eddy a whirlpool which could suck anything or person down. As I neared it, the owner of the dhoonga shouted at me to keep away. It was dangerous, he cautioned me.

I was scared and started swimming in the opposite direction blindly without realizing that I was swimming towards the middle of the river. Soon, I got caught in the flow of the river, which was practically in spate. I was swept down and very soon could see the third bridge (Fateh Kadal).

I realized after the first fright that I would have to use all my strength against the current to get out of its clutches to reach the opposite bank. It seemed to me there was a slight lull in the pressure of the current. I immediately struck out towards the opposite bank and continued beating the water with my thin arms. To my relief, I discovered that I was just

ten feet away from the bank. One more effort and I reached the bank, touched the mud and crawled up with my chest heaving.

I stood there and wondered as to how I could get back to Razdan Yarbala, which was quite a distance upstream and on the opposite bank. I decided to sit down and think the problem over while walking up on the bank along the river. I was walking towards the second bridge (Habba Kadal) and discovered that the river was flowing from the second bridge to the third bridge and if I got into the flow of the current I could go with it up to or just a little before where I wanted to climb ashore at Razdan yaar-bala.

No sooner had the thought crossed my mind, than I decided to implement it. I reached the temple just below the second bridge and waded into the water. With a few powerful strokes, I reached the middle of the river and the flow of the current carried me down. I kept a watch at which place I had to make a maximum effort to cross over to the other side.

My arms were feeling like sticks but I had to keep fighting. Inch-by-Inch I reached across two thirds of the width of the river and was so exhausted that once my feet touched firm ground below the water, I did not have the energy to climb the first step of the bathing ghat. I lay there panting for quite sometime until my breathing became normal and I looked around for my clothes. My cousins were there and I made a joke out of the experience.

Even after all these years, I can never forget the terror and the fear that I experienced. It was an experience. Yes, an experience to last a lifetime.

The Sound Of Music

Grandfather Baghwan Das Sapru's brother had four sons. Out of these four, he gave away one son in adoption to his relatives who lived close by practically next to Razdan Kocha.

His name was Niranjana Nath Trisal and he used to stay at his adopted parents' house and would frequently come to the Sapru house and also stay there. From the beginning, he had an ear for music but given our economic state (both in the adopted family and his original family) he could not be sent to a music school. Normal schooling was started which after some time petered out. The most remarkable thing that one can remember about this diamond of a man was that he learnt his music from the most primitive instruments. And thereby hangs a tale.

On the ground floor in most of the houses at ground level inside the rooms was such that a man could sit on the floor next to the window and watch the scene outside. The wooden plank out of which the lower portion of the window was made was thin and if you thumped it with your hand it would produce a sound and become a kind of primitive substitute tabla, especially if you used both your hands, one on the outside and the other on the inside. In Kashmiri, this part of the window is called "Dhamdhar". This was his first musical instrument. But whenever he thumped the dhamdhar, he would incur the displeasure of all the elders and often get chased out of the house. Most growing boys

especially adolescents always explore the kitchen so that they can find something to eat at odd times. Once, Niranjan or Nera as his contemporaries called him, sauntered into the kitchen ,suddenly his eyes lit up with pleasure. What he saw was a strainer made of thin leather, which would produce a lovely musical sound in his expert hands.

Poor man, he had to go through all kinds of hell to get himself a job and that too, job that his family and the community and the relatives considered respectable. It is very strange, looking back that while teaching as a profession was lauded, that of a drawing master and a band master were looked down upon. And so poor Nera Trisal had to struggle outside the home, learn the job of playing all the instruments in the orchestra and conducting it as a team and eventually he landed a job as a band master in a school and that gave him a regular income, made him respectable enough. He got married and raised a family.

The best part of his life to my mind and that of hundreds of his admirers was the public adulation that he received and revelled in. By the time, our generation was growing up, he was in his prime and the memorable occasions were when he could show his prowess during a parade and would lead the band that would lead the school team in a procession through the main streets of Srinagar especially the main road from which leads the lane to his house.

In 1951, Pandit Nehru came to Srinagar and there was a procession of schoolboys and other contingents, which went through the main road. It was a lovely summer afternoon, with a pleasant breeze and thousand of people looking out of the windows of the houses, which lined two the sides of the road. And of course, our hero Niranjan Nath was leading with that long magical stick which he kept throwing into the air and catching it without faltering in keeping up with the tempo and speed of movement.

I was in one of the houses glued to the window watching the parade and looking out for him because I suddenly discovered that his wife, children, relatives both from the Trisal and Sapru families had gathered to watch him march past. As the procession reached Razdan Kocha, everyone suddenly pointed towards his impressive figure resplendent in uniform with the tora of his turban flying majestically in the air and right at that spot he simple looked up smiling probably for the benefit of his wife who was watching from the window. To make it a memorable occasion, he held the stick and threw it up, caught it expertly and having done that, without batting an eye marched on smartly.

He used to come quite regularly to see my father. And on various occasions I noticed and heard that he had a lifelong fascination for the humble potato. Among the Kashmiris, there is a dish known as “Dum Aloo” which is potato cooked in chilli based red masala with thick gravy, normally an essential ingredient on special guest dinners or weddings. Today,. anywhere in India or even abroad, the Dum Aloo is a five star hotel dish which can only be ordered and consumed by the rich and the famous.

But my favourite Niranajan Nath of the band master fame loved it and would eat it as often as possible. He was a versatile man. You don’t find many like him anymore.

Run Up To Shankarcharya Hill

I studied in Biscoe Mission High School from 1949 to 1951, admittedly a fairly short period to claim to be an alumni of the school. However what needs to be stressed is that even in the early fifties after Biscoe had left India and passed away in Rhodesia, his teachings had not been forgotten.

One of the requirements was physical training for boys that is swimming, football, hockey, drilling and distance running. For some inexplicable reason, they divided the boys not by classes but by age. There were two groups one was called the Under 10 boys of age and the other was 10 to 12. It so happened that my cousin, who was nine months older than me was put in under 10 and I who was nine months younger was put in 10 to 12.

The reason for this classification was that the distance to be run by the younger boys was less and for the older boys more. It was a tradition of the school to have an annual run up to the Shankaracharya hill and I faced the daunting task of having to run up to the top of the hill, bring a chit back which would indicate that I had completed the run.

As I struggled up along with bigger boys, I felt that I would collapse and die on the way. But I did not want to be left behind and struggled. At long last huffing and puffing, I reached the top and practically collapsed but took my chit and I was one of the last ones to arrive and fell into the arms of the veteran teacher Isher Kaul and teacher Janakinath. I was revived, given a glass of water and subsequently a hot glass of milk with horlicks.

That ended my career as a track star.

As an aside one might mention that our school had a drilling squad and I used to envy the boys who were selected for it. One of them was Chamanlal Nehru who also lived in our neighbourhood. He was my classmate and later on he completed his higher education. He holds a doctorate and later on became a professor of Mathematics.

The Lighter Side

His haste, their Patience

You must have heard the saying “the wealth of a nation for an inch of time”. In the Kashmir valley, during the early part of the last century, time did indeed go and move very slowly since, speed was something unheard of. People walked to work at a slow pace on foot and there were no speed limits. Only when a thief was running away, did people shout and then also not run.

Practically everything about birth, marriage, life and death were entwined in their little world within the seven bridges. A small nugget of news directly concerning the valley was discussed for weeks on end and gossip was the staple diet for the housewives and a higher version of it called local news was that of the males who went out of the house to earn their living in the service of the Governor.

In this idyllic world, there lived a man in a joint family who discovered early in life that it would be impossible for him to develop even a nodding acquaintance with education and ultimately employment. In fact, as he grew older, he and work became total strangers. His parents tried their best to get him to work but he refused to budge.

The net result was that living in a joint family, he was supported by all for his food and clothing and nothing much more. During the daytime, when the menfolk went to work, he was utilized for running errands and doing small jobs for the family like going out to the nearby baker or grocer or tailor or cobbler etc.,

It so happened once that our hero clad as he was in his pheran was sitting outside watching small children play when he was called inside by the grandmother. There was at this time in the family one of the ladies who was shortly expecting a baby. In those days, there were hardly any telephones, any taxis, any ambulances to take an expectant lady to the hospital. In fact, in those days very few births took place in hospitals.

The normal course used to be to call the midwife who would assist in the delivery of the child and oversee the post delivery treatment of the mother and that of the newborn child. Thus, the grandmother told our hero to go and call the midwife of the mohalla as her daughter in law was already in labour and the baby was due any minute. She impressed upon him that he should hurry up and fetch the midwife immediately.

Suitably impressed by the urgency of the situation, our hero pulled the right hand noru (sleeve) of his pheran over his shoulder and started walking out of the house with great quick strides. The last that the children who were playing saw of him was when he turned the corner at the end of the lane where they lived.

Grandma was waiting impatiently and the other ladies of the house joined together and when the labour pains had become acute, the ladies of the house decided that they would have to help with the delivery without the presence of the midwife. The baby arrived, everyone heaved a sigh of relief and there was joy and happiness around as the mother and the child were both healthy.

After a couple of hours, grandma asked whether anybody had seen the messenger she had sent to fetch the midwife. None had. Anyway nobody worried too much about our hero's absence. The man never came in the evening, was missing for the night and missing for the week and the month. Several months passed and the baby grew rapidly.

Soon he began to speak and started playing with the older children in the courtyard nearly a year old now. Meanwhile, the family had practically forgotten our hero who had totally disappeared. One day the baby, for whose birth our hero had been sent to fetch the midwife, suddenly shouted for his mother and said in his lisping voice 'Amma Amma -----' and pointed towards a weebegone figure and before anyone could say anything the figure marched towards the door.

In most traditional houses in Kashmir, the main door to the house had a strong bottom base where the bolt used to be fixed. In the open position, one had to be careful when crossing or stepping over the threshold of the house. This our hero forgot and his big toe hit the threshold and he fell flat on his face. The sound of his fall brought the rest of the members of the family including the baby and everyone looked at him.

Of course, it was our hero returning from his trip to fetch the midwife. With everyone looking at him, our hero felt that he owed the people around including the baby for whom he had originally gone an explanation.

"Wye balye myni ichi jaldi"

"Damn me for unnecessarily hurrying up." Yes, hurrying up. He was only one year late.

LADISHAH

“A typical character, “Ladishah”, imbibed with strange features represents Kashmiri (Koshur) queer way of commenting critics, especially of a person with a political career, who has had failures only as his stock of activities. It is a poetic satire sung in a rhythmic tone. The man who characterizes as “Ladishah” dons a bafoon’s attire of a long gown with a turban and a big iron fork (chimta) in his hands to play upon.

“Thus while playing on tune with the fork, Ladishah comments critique on someone, a major portion of it being hypocritical truths and white lies. The lies overshadow the truths and the listeners relish to make a fun out of it. While it would be a satirical way of conveying for the sake of fun, we have entered into a real era of Ladishah in our community after the migration. In the post-migration period, the real Ladishahs have emerged who play this critical role in this distressful and painful state of migration, instead of extending a helpful attitude towards the affected and as well make efforts at uniting the community firm like a rock.

“These post – migration “Ladishahs” never look back to their own failures but are bent upon to bring discredit to the community. They simply feel jealous and prejudicial of the successes of others. In any sort of welfare measure at any level or gathering, they prove fatal to the community’s interests.

“Whatever nice and humane behaviour we were exhibiting while in the Valley, we have over a passage of one decade lost those values. The fund of humane behaviour is drifting away, instead of integrating it, in one wholeness of sympathetic and helpful attitude.

This wave of unhelpfulness has to be shunned and we all must rise to the occasion to save the community from further losses of good values which at one time we imbibed, apart from exhibiting it as well. We wish that the microscopic community, endowed as it is with total literacy both in India and abroad, turns into one full eternal force one day, resulting in rejuvenating the ties of bondage.

“Come all and kick off the bad genetic behaviour of selfishness and learn from around as we have had a total exposure over this decade now. We didn’t remain a frog in a well but a frog in a well but a frog in ocean.”

Koshur Samachar , Sept 2000.

The world of ‘Nasha’

In practically every Indian village, there used to be certain members of the fraternity who were important members according to their profession. Each village had its own barber, butcher, teacher, postman and even a wrestler. While all this can be checked out from history books, there was one more member who was not officially mentioned but who was always physically present.

We are referring here to their village ‘Charsi’ who apart from his other normal occupation was also an opium addict who indulged in this rather undercover activity but after a while everybody in the village knew. There was hardly any marriage when the Charsi would not be included in the barat that left the village to get the bride.

So it was in Kashmir too. There were places where opium used to be smoked. In the urban and semi urban areas when men collected, it became like an informal club and one of the facilities offered were communal baths. In Srinagar City, there were a few quite a few places, which were known as “takias”.

Now this story does not have anything to do with takias by themselves, but with the concept of the glorious laziness that opium addiction brought about in people. Once upon a time, there were three addicts. Incidentally in Kashmiri addicts of that kind are called “Shodas”. All three Shodas were once sitting during winter under one blanket after having imbibed the contents of the opium pipe.

Suddenly one of them smelt smoke. It needs to be mentioned that most of the houses in Kashmir used to have a great deal of wood used in making them. So fires were quite common in winter.

Said the first shoda “Hayo, naar, ha” (Hey, fire)

Said the second shoda “Sakhias” (Bless you)

Said the third shoda “Bakawas” (Nonsense)

That about sums it up. Even the risk of a fire engulfing him didn’t deter the shoda from enjoying his opium-induced heaven. Ah, those were the days.

Win, lose or draw – you still lose

Sooma, Bansi and Ratna were contemporaries, classmates and friends also. Apart from that, all three of them lived in the same locality of Bana Mohalla. Their houses were practically on the main road or what could pass for a main road. In fact, it was a bazaar a

slightly respectable lane with shops on either side and the only traffic was tongas, cycles and people.

All three were in school, the Mission High School at Fateh, Kadal. Their parents were all poor lower middle class people. Their fathers were holding clerical jobs in Srinagar. One was in the Municipality, the other in the AG's Office and the third was in the Shali Store.

They had a common routine after school. Homework over, their mothers used to send them to buy sundry items from the shops near their house. By about six, they would have collected either at the barber shop or the medical shop or the radio repair shop.

Days, weeks, months, years passed. They reached the college stage and completed their degree and started looking for jobs. Their mothers, proud of their achievements (all three passed in third class) were already searching for suitable brides for them.

Every morning and evening, they would scan the papers for any kind of a job. This went for some time and suddenly one day Sooma and Bansi discovered that Ratna was missing. They went to his house where his mother told them that he had gone to Jammu to meet her brother.

Satisfied with the explanation, the other two continued with their daily routine. Soon one day one of them managed to get a job and a few months later the other one also got a job. But whenever they met, they always wondered what happened to Ratna. It was a mystery.

One day suddenly a bombshell fell. In the paper, it was announced that Ratna had been given a gold medal for a specific act about which there were no details. He was honoured at a special function by a Minister in Delhi. Even his photograph was there in the paper.

“I say, look at him, all that double breast suit and all. Who does he think he is?”

“Well, he got the prize and he is in the picture not we”. For a while, there was silence with each of them busy with his thoughts. After a while, one of them muttered;

‘YOU KNOW, HE WAS NOT SUCH AN INTELLIGENT FELLOW. IN THE SCHOOL IN OUR CLASS, I GOT BETTER MARKS THAN HIM,’ SAID BANSI

“Ha, Me too. It was just pure bloody luck for him”.

With that they dismissed the man who had been their partner for such a long time. Soon Ratna was forgotten and Bansi and Sooma continued with their lives but kept in touch with each other since they lived in the same locality. By now both of them were married.

One Sunday, Bansi rushed to Sooma’s house in great glee and shouted, “Did you see the newspaper? You heard the news?”

“What news, what news?”

“Ratna has been arrested and sent to jail”.

For a while, neither of them spoke. Suddenly, both of them said the same thing “I always knew he was a shikastlad. I knew he would not amount to anything. Serves him right. I would not shed any tears over him”.

Observing the scene, the bard said, “How difficult it is to please them. When you win, they are not pleased, when you lose, they are pleased. But win lose or draw, you still lose. You can never win them “.

ALIGEBRA NE JABAR KIYA

He was a hard working boy of average intelligence. He was struggling to pass his examination. While in most of his subjects he was fairly all right above the 35% marks,

in Algebra, he was at a total loss. He just couldn't understand the equations and found that they just fogged his brain.

He was terrified of the coming examination and dare not confess to his father that he was going to definitely fail in Algebra and even if he passed in all other subjects, he would still fail the examination. But like a lamb being led to slaughter, he went through all other papers and did fairly well. Algebra was the last paper.

He was desperate. He thought of running away and joining the army. After an hour of daydreaming, he came down to the earth and knew that he would have to go to the examination hall and appear for the examination in this paper of Algebra.

Came the day and the time and our hero was walking slowly to his doom. He sat on his table, answer sheets were distributed, and then the question papers and the examination began. He went through the question paper ten times and found that he could not solve a single question.

Tears came to his eyes and the only sound he heard was the invigilators' footsteps going up and down the line. A few of his tears fell on the answer paper, which got wet.

At last, there was only ten minutes grace period left with the invigilator announcing the time. In sheer desperation, he thought of appealing to the good nature of the examiner who would be correcting the paper. The heart-rending appeal read as follows:

“ALIGEBRA NE JABAR KIYA (Algebra has been cruel)

WAKAT KI RAHI TANGI (There was shortage of time)

KALAM BICHARA KIYA LIKHE (What will the poor pen write)

KAKAZ RAHI NANGI “ (Answer paper has remained blank)

Below this was written an appeal “Have mercy”.

He handed in his paper and left the examination hall, sure that he had failed the examination. While all other friends of his were celebrating the end of the examination, our hero was totally depressed so much so that even his mother noticed.

But time does not wait for anybody. Soon on the other side of the curtain, the examiner saw his paper and read his heart-rending appeal. He kept his answer paper aside to take a decision about it later. Eventually, being in a good mood, he decided to exercise his prerogative of awarding him thirty-five marks, which would help him, pass the examination.

But our hero didn't know this. On the day the results were to be announced, he was waiting for the axe to fall. All other classmates of his rushed out to buy the newspaper, but he stayed at home. (In those days high school examination results used to be published in local newspapers)

For a while there was no sound coming from the street and then suddenly five classmates rushed to him in his house and announced, "We have all passed" our hero stared at them and one of them said "Hey, you too have passed ". Dazed, he grabbed the newspaper and saw with his own eyes his register number among the successful candidates.

Said the bard: "Miracles will never cease to happen"

Amen to that.

Sudharshan's Gift

He was in his late thirties, a happy contented man, always laughing, smiling and ready to lend a helping hand to his fellow human beings. He did many good deeds the details about which have unfortunately been lost to posterity. However, from the dark recesses of antiquity, we have unearthed a historic instance of his generosity of spirit.

In 1946, there was no indication that the princely rule would end within a year. It was the 16th birthday of the Crown Prince Yuvaraj Karan Singh. In keeping with the traditional practices, on such occasions, the Maharaja Hari Singh would hold a durbar where prominent people would come dressed in traditional finery to convey their good wishes for the Yuvaraj's birthday and give a Nazarana (present) to His Highness.

The news of the occasion had already swept the seven bridges of Srinagar and most Kashmiri Pandits had naturally heard about it. Of course, only a handful of the rich,

the influential and high officials would be going to the palace. The date was declared a holiday, but essential services like transport, communications, postal and telegraphs services, hospitals were open and running.

On this morning, Sudharshan Kaul found himself in a pensive mood so much so that his son who had just turned 16 asked him as to what the matter was. He muttered some excuse and got up to get dressed to go out. His son Natha was puzzled and followed his father surreptitiously as he started walking towards Amira Kadal and he crossed the road at Lal Chowk and went towards a lane that linked it to the Bund.

Soon, Sudharshan reached the Head Post office at the Bund with his son following who found his father filling up a telegraphic money order form and paying rupees five to the counter clerk for sending the money. The clerk gave him the receipt and Sudarshan left the post office.

Curious as to the contents and the beneficiary of the TMO, Natha the son went to the clerk and requested him to show him the TMO form and the message. The following is that what he read;

“To

His Highness

Maharaja Hari Singh of Jammu and Kashmir,

The Palace,

Gupkar,

Srinagar,

Kashmir.

WHAT HARI SINGH FATHER, WHAT SUDARSHAN FATHER

WHAT NATHA SON, WHAT KARAN SINGH SON. HEREWITH RUPEES FIVE FOR MILK ON HIS BIRTHDAY

SENDER’S NAME: SUDARSHAN

Khorak Cure

Life went on as usual in our little world within the seven bridges in Srinagar. In Kashmir, majority of the medical shops were manned by Kashmiri Pandits. Most of the medical shops had either Doctors coming in for examining patients or practicing closed by so that their prescription could be filled up at the medical shops. Most of the shops were dispensing chemists.

Today dispensing chemists have practically become extinct. To explain to the modern generation:

Most of the prescriptions were either in tablet form or in syrup form. There was some kind of a taboo about the tablet, so sometimes two or three different tablets were made into powder by the chemist with few liquid medicines to form what became later known as mixture. The bottles in which this mixture was sold had the doses marked outside and in Kashmiri they are still called Khorak. Thus a dose is a Khorak.

So it was, as our story begins, one evening that the father came out of the house to buy a bottle of mixture from the nearby medical shop. There was no need to waste money on consulting a doctor as he had himself seen and checked that his son was suffering from cold, cough and headache. So off he went to the shop and got a bottle of what was popularly then known as Katarrh mixture.

As the buyer and the seller were known to each other, the seller didn't press for cash payment and the father took the bottle home. It had the doses marked on the bottle. In all there were five doses of mixture in the bottle.

He reached home and decided to inaugurate the cure for the family by taking the first dose himself. There were three of them, himself his wife and his darling son. For the second dose, he called his wife. She was in the kitchen and as she came, her foot got entangled in the grass mat (wagvou) and this created a movement, which eventually reached the bottle just a foot away where her husband had forgotten to put the cork back on the bottle.

The bottle began to dance and was about to fall with the medicine going to spill out of the bottle. But her husband, ever alert although he had forgotten to cork the bottle, grabbed the bottle in acrobatic style. The bottle was saved, but at this moment, the neighborhood cat, the scourge of the mohalla rats, decided to pay the family a visit. The wife, on seeing the cat, forgot the medicine and rushed back into the kitchen to protect

her milk and the fish she had cooked for dinner. She looked at the cat, made threatening movements, but the canine hero sat on the shelf unperturbed and gazed about him.

Seeing that her threatening posture had no effect on the cat, the wife appealed to the husband for help who got up and began chasing the cat. The cat jumped over his bald head and landed just on the spot where he was sitting practically next to the bottle of mixture. As it was passing the bottle, the cat swished its tail which finally threw the bottle to the ground.

As it hit the ground, the mixture began to leak since the cork had not been placed tightly at the mouth of the bottle. Eventually, the cat decided to leave the unfriendly house and the master of the house retrieved the bottle. Looking closely at the doses he discovered that two doses had irrigated the rug also known as wogvou to the locals.

So out of five doses, three doses were used. Just then, the apple of his eye, his son arrived with his latest pet puppy, a mongrel of uncertain origin, a veritable flea factory.

“Tathaji, Jimmy, my dog is sick, he has got a bad throat. Give him some medicine”. And then seeing the bottle of mixture he grabbed it before papa could protest. So, the next dose went to the dog and that brought the level of medicine in the bottle to one dose.

He persuaded his son to leave the dog on the ground floor and come up since he had a severe cough. The son was finally cajoled to drink the last dose.

All very well. Days passed and one fine day the chemist accosted him on the street and asked for the payment for the bottle of mixture.

“What mixture?”

“The one I sold to you. “

“Oh that”. But how can I pay you for that? You see, I took one dose, did not help me, two doses fell on the wogvou and was drunk by the cat. That is three doses. The fourth doses were given to the dog which died the next day and the fifth my son took and he is still coughing. So, where is the question of paying you. I took the medicine so that it could cure. It hasn't. So don't expect any money from me”.

Needless to say, the matter ended there for the time being, but created a long-term situation against which the Indo-Pakistan problems pale into insignificance.

King of Thieves

Among the Pandits, it is generally believed that most are white collar workers, completely law abiding and peaceful. While this is true in a majority of the cases, we did produce within the little world of ours of seven bridges, a few who were on the wrong side of the law. Now whether this story is true or not, it is what I have heard in Narpirastan, Srinagar, Kashmir.

His name was Mahadev and nobody seemed to know his surname. He was reputed to be very light fingered and fleet footed. Apparently, he was not just a thief, but he certainly was an innovative artiste even in his thievery. Over a period of time, he was given a kind of title and was often referred to as Mahadev Bishte. The last word would indicate the words used by a Pandit housewife to drive away a marauding cat.

Now the greatest exploit of the man was related and heard over and over again. I would like to record here for the younger generation of Pandits who may not have either been born in Kashmir or even visited Kashmir not to talk of having heard of Mahadev Bishte.

Hear goes the story. Once upon a time, there lived a rich man. He was the rais(aristocrat) of the locality. One day, at a marriage function, Mahadev Bishte saw him and having had his dinner he was hurrying away but the rais shouted for him to come and meet him, which he did.

After that, Mahadev Bishte used to visit the rich man occasionally and one day with a number of his guests in attendance he asked Mahadev a question

“ I hear that you are a successful thief although you have not been caught red handed and convicted?”

“Mahara, that is an exaggeration. I am an artiste. Anybody can steal, but doing it with a finesse is what I am good at “.

“Oh is that so, alright, can you steal anything from this room without my knowledge.”

“Mahara, that is like taking sweets from a baby’s hand”

“Oh, well then” the rais looked around and suddenly a mischievous glint came in his eyes.

“Can you steal my pyjamas from me which I am wearing now without my knowledge. If you can do that, I shall proclaim you as the King of Thieves”.

Mahadev Bishte listened to this challenge and very quietly said.

“I accept your challenge. And I shall do it within this month”.

The whole story spread like wild fire within the seven bridges and everybody was speculating as to how the star thief would become the king thief.

A month passed and on the very last day Mahadev Bishte sent word to the rich man that he was ready to prove his ability. The rais had almost forgotten the challenge that he had thrown but suddenly remembered it. His entire retinue was present in the same room where the challenge had been thrown at Mahadev Bishte.

With a dramatic flourish, Mahadev produced the Pyjama. There was a gasp of surprise from the audience and the rais gaped.

“I now remember that I had lost this pyjama and I never thought that you had taken it. Did you enter this room to take my pyjama?”

“Na Mahara. I did not enter your house, but I did steal your pyjama when you were sleeping. Now do you acknowledge that I have some skill”.

“Yes, Yes, I agree, I agree. But how did you do it. “

“That Huzoor will remain a secret. It is my trade secret. “

With that Mahadev Bishte walked out of the room. And left his audience totally non-plussed. Months later, he told a friend about it.

After he received the challenge, he scouted around the house of the rais and found that the room in which he slept had a small sink on the floor with a pipe leading out into the drain. He checked it during the day in light and later on during the night in darkness. On one particular night, he got a bamboo pole poured honey on it and coated the entire pole with it. At the top of the pole he put a hook tied to it. And he pushed the pole through the pipe into the room of the victim. Soon ants came and he pushed the pole

slowly towards his victim's legs as he was sleeping. After some time, the ants laden with honey started exploring the rest of the rais's anatomy.

The rais woke up irritated that his sleep was disturbed, did not notice in the darkness the offending honey –covered pole and irritated, removed the pyjama which promptly fell on the pole which was very slowly withdrawn by Mahadev along with the Pyjama.

How do I know this? Mahadev Bishte, remember, told a friend, who told a friend, who told a friend, who told a friend, WHO TOLD ME.

He was truly the King of Thieves.

FEUDAL LOGIC

“What are you doing?” roared the feudal lord from the balcony to the servant in the garden.

“Have you watered the plants?”

“Yes master, I have finished all the work “

“All right, see that pillar. Go and press it”

Shocked, the servant looked at the pillar and at his two hands and was about to object but then better sense prevailed and he found himself pressing the pillar as he was used to pressing the master's legs.

Fortunately for the servant, the master fell asleep on the sofa on the balcony. So he gave rest to his hands and thanked Almighty for small mercies.

The very next day, he had to face a bigger ordeal. He had just started watering the plants when God smiled at him and it started raining. He was happy that he did not have to water the plants. But his Lord and master thundered from above.

“Where are you, you lazy scoundrel? Why have you not finished watering the plants?”

“Huzoor, It is raining”

“So what. start watering the plants”.

NECTAR & WATER

Soon the weather changed from clear blue skies of summer to glorious golden leaves of autumn. And it was time to go for a picnic. And the Feudal Lord also wanted to have a change. So the entire household retinue threw itself into a frenzy of work to arrange for the picnic. A dhoonga (Houseboat) was organized for the occasion and the entire party set out traversing the Dal Lake towards Nishat, Shalimar and their destination Harwan.

Harwan, as we all know, is famous for its water. It used to be said that if you drank Harwan water, no disease could afflict you. That was the reason why our favourite Lord decided to go to Harwan. The entire party comprised the Lord’s family, the servants, the relatives and a few friends. After reaching Harwan, carpets were rolled out on the green grass and the master sat with a pillow behind him relaxed enjoying the scenic beauty around him.

Soon, a cup of Kahwa arrived along with the hookah (water pipe) and interesting conversation ensued. It was a glorious day and everybody felt happy including the master’s servant who had been ordered to water the plants while it was raining. He was hoping that the master would not call him because he knew that the master was angry with him but soon lunchtime came and as soon as master had finished eating he shouted for his gardener.

“Go to the stream and get me fresh water to drink”. The servant ran to do his master’s bidding. He returned with the vessel full of water. As he was drinking this pure God given water, a thought suddenly struck him”.

“Hey, Khambakht (idiot) come here. Tell me, did you also drink this water?”

The servant, who had years of experience, folded his hands and said the following immortal words:

“Nahi, Huzoor. I brought water in an empty bottle from the mar (the water way with dirty water) to drink here.”

Satisfied, the master drank some more Harwan water and viewed the world kindly.

BARTANIA KE LIYAE JANG KARNA HAI

Fighting for the British Empire

*“Bartania Ki Faujain Bahut Bahaduri Ke Saath Ladte Ladte Peechey Hut Gayeen”
(Armies of Britain, fighting bravely, retreated)*

- *Urdu Bulletin, All India Radio, 1942 (During World War II).*

In the early 20th century, the British Empire was at its zenith in the first part and in the second part of the century, the empire broke up. At the time of World War I, the Indian Princes had an arrangement with the British Crown for supplying troops during war to the British Army for deployment in various theatres of war. During that period, they were called Imperial Service Troops.

In the First World War, the princely state of Kashmir also provided troops for service in the Middle East and in France as well. When Second World War came around, the princes again sent troops and even helped the war effort financially.

During World War II, so the story goes, there was a shortage of troops and recruiting parties were going around enlisting men to train them as soldiers for the war. Kashmir had a small but efficient army. The J & K infantry had made a name for itself. But most of its recruits came either from the Muzaffarabad or Jammu districts like Poonch, Rajauri, Mirpur and several districts of Himachal such as Kangra, Mandi, Palampur etc.,

That makes it clear that there were very few recruits volunteering from the Kashmir valley. It is interesting that out of the small Kashmiri Pandit community outside

Kashmir quite a few volunteered during the war. It is only after Independence, that some Pandits from the valley volunteered to join the armed forces.

But to get back to our story. A recruiting party arrived in Kashmir valley and began interviewing candidates. In the cities ,they have got very little response and then went to the rural areas. There too the response was poor. However, they were able to get a few recruits and this is the story of Kashmiri recruits' encounter with army discipline.

It was explained to this groups of recruits that training would begin the next day. At the sound of the first bugle, they had to get up and have a wash. At the sound of the second bugle, they had to have their breakfast. And at the sound of the third bugle, they had to present themselves on the parade ground.

The recruits slept in the barracks. At 6.00 A.M., when the first bugle sounded, nobody heard it and they went on sleeping. When the second bugle blew, some of them woke up and tried to wake up others. A few got up, some scratched their stomachs, having completely forgotten the instructions given to them in the previous day.

When the final bugle call came, one of the youngsters in the group woke up the oldest among them and asked him as to what they should do.

The wise man muttered something and then clearly declared in no uncertain terms:

“Yemen how Jungus asi gachon, themen hov gache adam (Aaram) asun”(Those who have to go to war must get rest first) and promptly went back to sleep.

Tell-tail number plate

When God created the horse, this world had not been contaminated by either roads or driving licenses or vehicles or number plates. In fact, the horse ruled the roost.

But also today, only those, who want to make a fast buck, are the ones who think of the horse. For the rest, he is forgotten even as the dinosaurs.

With mechanical monsters stalking the roads, even the traffic manuals do not recognize the quadrupeds. Otherwise, how can one explain the report that a man riding admittedly in a “spirited” state”, a horse at night on a road in Belgium was fined by the Magistrate for having no white light in front and no red light at the back of the HORSE.

God must chuckle to himself, were he to deign to read the report, but his Secretariat no doubt having taken note of it, would have had another look at the horse's anatomy. Now I ask of you, can the horse's posterior or anterior take a light?

It is not the Belgian horse's fault, but our horses are no different even in this country. But the report from Belgium leads one to believe that some people are starting to delve into the realm of the ridiculous. Here is the story of an Indian horse, who, legend has it, had many accomplishments to its credit.

Far away and long ago, a venerable gentleman living 32 miles away from Srinagar (Kashmir) at a place called Khanabal, had invited the State's I-GP, who was an Englishman to tea, (Or so he said while narrating his tall story). And since the tea was to be given at Anantnag, he had to rush to Srinagar. Let the narrator relate his own horsey adventure.

“As I was galloping past the trees and the people and thinking of what I had to order for the Sahib's tea especially the English sweetmeats, cakes and pastries from Ahdoo's, I beheld in my rearview mirror (the horse's that is) the face of that scourge of the road, Rigzon, the Traffic Inspector on our route.

“My horse (may God bless him for being an intelligent soul) drew my attention to the menace behind us by a gentle nudge on my posterior. Knowing that the speed limit on this highway was 30 miles an hour and my horse (he claims Arabian ancestry), was doing 50 miles, he realized that it would bring us into trouble.”

“Behind, Rigzon was gaining on us, horning to find our identity, but this wonderful creature, my companion who was bearing me ever so swiftly to Srinagar in a flash realized all this. Lo and behold as the Traffic Inspector passed us on his motorcycle, my horse lifted its tail and covered the number plate on its rump.

“The result, you can imagine. Rigzon was furious. But he could not prove any case against me because he did not get my horse's number from the securely hair-hidden plate.”

This breathless, tall, horsey tale, he told his wide-eyed, adoring audience none of whom wanted to know the horse's registered number.

The exploit became a legend. If the Belgian horse is required to have a white and a red light, can the Indian horse be far behind?

Deccan Herald, 4-10-1977

Chel Chegh

Once upon a time, there lived in Srinagar a family with a son who had some very peculiar habits. He was a very well behaved hard working person who would be the envy of any parent.

The habit that his parents dreaded was his practice of going to weddings without being invited. In the neighborhood, almost everybody knew about this failing of his.

Without an invitation, he would go and sit along with other guests for lunch or dinner. He was known as a *duda* in the locality.

One day, it so happened, that the every next house was celebrating a wedding and our man was watching the preparations from the window adjacent to the courtyard of the next house. His mother noted this and tried desperately to think of some way of dissuading her son from going uninvited to the function.

Suddenly, she got an inspiration. She faced her son

“My son do not go there. I will cook all the dishes that they will serve there, you can eat here sitting near the window and watch while you eat. That way you will not go there and yet you will be able to enjoy looking at others eating and nobody can call you *duda*.”

“Yes mother I would like to do. Honestly I very much would like to do that but there is one big problem, which you have not thought about. I may be able to eat everything that they serve there, but what about the *Chel Chegh*. Can you provide that?”

“No my son I cannot provide that. I concede defeat”.

Chel Chegh: A word that is very difficult to translate into English but what it conveys is that atmosphere that is created during a wedding feast where it is a combination of smells, conversations, humming noises, vessels banging, children shouting and adults yelling, pulling and pushing for service and the physical proximities of one with the other sitting there waiting to be fed.

15

Surnames And Nicknames

What is in a name?

Kalhana and Charaka, Lalithaditya and Avantivarman are names of Kashmiri Pandits that conjure up images of grandeur and achievement, glory and bravery, intelligence and brilliance. But if you ask anyone of the present generation, he will say Charaka who, Kalhana who?

Names have changed over the centuries, styles have changed, people have changed but the psyche has not changed. Though you and I are centuries apart from Lalithaditya and Avantivarman, we still have the same blood and ethos.

Hannibal the great military genius had no surname; neither did Ashoka nor King Richard or Alfred nor Vishwamitra nor Rama or Laxmana and many in those times managed with one name and sometimes with titles, but over a period of time surnames began to emerge. English surnames for our purpose illustrate this point. Mr. John Green does not have green skin and Robert Winter has nothing do with the making of seasons which is in the realm of nature. Mason has nothing to do with stones, bricks and mortar. Carpenter is not a skilled worker always. Mr. White might be a black man meaning not a European and Smith might not wield a hammer and Mr. Stone might be an artist with no relation to stone working.

There is an interesting historic instance of names being taken by the Catholic Community of Great Britain on the orders of their Protestant King. He ordered that the Irish should take only the names of towns, cities, and seasons and not similar names to that of the English.

Let Louis L'amour, the distinguished Western writer, give us a glimpse of names of the Irish both on their home ground and in the colonies from his book "Over on the dry side".

"What's your name, boy?"

"Doban Kernohan. They call me Doby."

"Irish... Well, we come of the same stock, Doby. I'm Irish, too... Mostly Irish. My family left the old country a long time ago, and an ancestor of mine went to Newfoundland, then to the Gaspé Peninsula. From there to here, it's a long story".

"You got a first name, mister?"

"Owen. A name that is sometimes Irish, and sometimes Welsh, they tell me. Well, there's been a sight of changing of names, Doby, especially among the Irish."

“There was a time long ago when Irishmen were ordered by law to take an English name, and around about fourteen sixty-five, a time later, all those in four counties were to take the name of a town, a color, or a skill. Such as Sutton, Chester, Cork, or Kinsale for the town. Or the colors –any one they’d happen to choose. Or a trade, such as carpenter, smith, cook, or butler, to name just a few.

“And some of the Irish changed their names because there was a move against us. Many in my family were killed, and when my great-grandfather escaped to England he was advised never to tell his true name, but to take another...or he’d be hunted down. So he took the name Chantry, although how he came by it I do not know, unless he happened to see and like the name, invented it, or took it from some man he admired. In any event, the name has served us well, and we, I trust, have brought it no dishonor.”

“The thing to remember is that this is your country now. It’s well to know about the land from which you came. There’s pride in a heritage, but it’s here you live. This is the land that gives you bread.

“I know little Irish history”, I said.

“That’s likely, Doby, but the thing to remember is that this is your country now. It’s well to know about the land from which you came. There’s pride in a heritage, but it’s here you live. This is the land that gives you bread.

“Yet it’s a good thing to know the ways of the old countries, too, and there’s no shame in remembering. There’s some as would have it a disgrace to be Irish. You’ll find places in eastern cities where they’ll hire no man with an Irish look or and an Irish name. A good many of those who come here are poor when they land, and nobody knows what lies behind them.

“Some are from families among the noblest on earth, and there’s many another who’s put a “Mac’ or an ‘O’ to his name to which he’s not entitled. But a man is what he makes himself, no matter what the blood or barony that lays behind him.

Such are names and such are surnames. Even first names sometimes are puzzling.

When Bulganin visited India, the day he landed in Delhi, a son was born to a Sardarji. He promptly named his son Bulganin Singh. An Air Force Officer, Wing Commander Dutta went to see the famous movie “Dr. Zhivago”. His wife was expecting a baby and soon he was blessed with a daughter. He named her Lara Dutta.

When M. Karunanidhi joined politics, among other things, he admired Joseph Stalin and when his son was born he promptly named him M.K. Stalin. The famous Tamil poet Kannadasan was a great admirer of Gandhiji. So he named his son Gandhi Kannadasan.

In India, the present trend in names has emerged from the onset of the Sikh rule in the 19th century. The addition of a surname to the given name has a striking similarity with the European system, which came into the country in a large way from the 18th century.

Among European and American names you generally have what they call the Christian name, the middle name and the surname.

For instance, Winston Spencer Churchill, William Jefferson Clinton are two instances of the European names where by and large the middle name remains an initial and is rarely used. In most states of Northern India, this system is followed and the Kashmiri Pandits system has a combination of both the European and the Indian.

You will notice that majority of the names among the Kashmiri Pandits have 'Nath' as the middle name. For instance Som Nath , Hreday Nath, Janki Nath. This is followed by the surname. The next most popular middle name is 'Lal' for instance Makhan Lal, Girdhari Lal followed by the surname. The name Krishen has also been used as a middle name such as Prediman Krishen Mattoo.

As the generations roll, so do the fashions in use of first names. For instance, old names like Sarwanand, Mahadev, Maheshwar, Govind, Jia Lal, Nand Lal, Kashi Nath, Prem Nath, Ratan Lal are just a few sample names that have gradually gone out of style among the male names. There are similar examples from female names for instance Rupawati, Kamalawati, Pushakuj, Arundati, Danawati, etc., along with many more have gone out of style. At one time, among the males between the first name and the surname the word 'Joo' would be inserted. For instance Mahadev Joo Sapru, Govind Joo Kaul etc., this too have gone out of style. Today our names have become more and more cosmopolitan in the sense that a number of North Indian names have crept in. This is the phenomenon, which can be seen clearly in Southern India where North Indian names have crept in as first name with many people. For instance names like Ashok, Ramesh, Rakesh, Asish etc., are being attached to their family names.

Despite being a small miniscule community, Kashmiri Pandits have quite a few divisions, which can drive any one up the wall. In this, history has also played a role. From 14th century to the 19th century a period of 500 years has seen many ups and downs, but mostly downs in the fortunes of the community. It was primarily a question of survival, mostly physical and at all costs retaining the identity of the community.

Today, it seems unbelievable for a community of half a million people to believe that we were reduced to just eleven families and today's Kashmiri Pandit is the progeny and descendant of those dauntless and brave eleven families. The last bout of persecution took place during Aurangzeb's time, when a large number of Kashmiri Pandits fled to Lahore and then spread out to Delhi, Lucknow, Kanpur, Allahabad , Jodhpur, Jaipur and bigger places like Calcutta.

It is from this happening that produced after generations people who became world famous like Moti Lal Nehru, Jawarhlal Nehru, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Kailas Nath Katju, Hreday Nath Kunzru. These are famous names but along with them also went ordinary people who are pursuing their lives even today in these places.

When an event takes place, it first produces unconnected information, followed by gossip and after some time, labels are attached to events and people. The Kashmiri Pandits who migrated and settled down in the plains of Northern India called themselves ‘Purana Kashur’ and to differentiate from those who still stayed on in the Kashmir Valley who were given the rather lower status of ‘Tazu Kashur’. Even today, this differentiation crops up in conversations.

A word about the migrants. When they settled down in the plains they had to adjust to local conditions and adopt certain local customs. Since the priorities were earning a living and getting ahead, somewhere along the line, they lost their link with the Kashmiri language. They cannot speak Kashmiri and therefore they are treated separately, which is patently unfair.

A by-product of this is linked to our main theme here – that of the middle names. While quite a few middle names have been retained a few new ones have been added. They are Narain, Bahadur and Kumar. For instance Pramod Narain Haksar, Tej Bahadur Sapru and Sudhir Kumar Dar.

Now comes the question of surnames, which requires an explanation that is based on history and circumstances. The evolution of surnames began in earnest in the 17th century when the migration began and individual family identification became necessary both inside the valley and outside. If one looks at the old, medieval and ancient Kashmiri Pandit names, one will find that there were none. Take a man like Kalhana. What was his Surname? Take Avantivaraman, Lalithadithya. Though they were royalty, there is no mention of a surname. So was the case with Rani Didi and Kota Rani. Surnames developed over two centuries and by the 19th century the list began to expand.

Initially we are told, as the legend goes, majority of the Kashmiri Pandits were Kauls or Kouls. The difference is only in English as the names were written originally in Sanskrit. As the numbers grew, Dhars were added to it. And then came the period of expansion. All of us know that Parsis also have surnames but look a little deeper and you will see that many of their surnames were linked to the work they did. For instance Batliwalla might have been in the business of Bottles and Daruwalla might have been in the business of selling alcohol.

With regard to Dhar, some controversial explanations have emerged. Apparently, the surname was spelt as Dar, which as Prof.Somnath Dhar stated that the Dhars of the Kashmiri Pandits community have originally come from Bengal/ Bihar. In Kashmir, Dar is a surname that is shared both by Hindus and Muslims. The Dhars are supposed to have migrated from Bihar to Kashmir to serve the rulers who were looking for “trustworthy Peshkars (revenue collectors) as they didn’t trust the local Hindus who were hand in glove with the local farmers, dilly dallying in the payment of the yearly revenue. Local folklore reflects social realities. As the Dhars spread-eagled into several clans, vying with one another in affluence, Kashmiris came out with a saying: “Dhar baja, mulk beja; mulk baja, Dhar beja” (“when the Dhars are prosperous, the country is starving – but when the country is prosperous, the Dhars are starving.”) That is / was the

Dhar syndrome. The adage persists among the older folks. It is they who preserve the folklore everywhere. (KS, Nov.1996)

Dr.B.N.Sharga adds “Prior to the Muslim invasion in the Valley, many Kashmiri Pandits were writing ‘Dar’ like other Kashmiri Pandits who were forcibly converted to Islam under threat and coercion from Muslim rulers, but a good majority of them retained their original Kashmiri Pandit surnames to show their past Hindu Pandit lineage like Ghulam Rasool Dar, Saifuddin Kitchlu, Mohammad Rasool Butt, Ghulam Kadir Muttoo, Ahmed Shah Jalalli etc..

“It was because of these changed circumstances in the valley under the Muslim rule that Kashmiri Pandits, who were writing ‘Dar’ earlier as their surname, changed it to ‘Dhar’ by adding an English letter ‘H’ to it to signify that they are Hindus and not Muslims and to keep their separate distinct identity intact.” (KS, Jan.1997)

In the same way, quite a few of the surnames among the Kashmiri Pandits have come out of either usage or the profession they were in. For instance, there goes the story of a man who had a tree in his backyard. The tree gave him trouble so he cut the branch. And it gave more trouble and he cut it at the stem, exposing the root. So, to reach his house one had to say “Go to the house where there is a ‘Teng’”. The word Teng in Kashmiri means the root or the high ground. So the family living in that house became Tengs and to this day their descendants are so called.

There used to be in the 17th and 18th century or even earlier professional travellers who did the travelling as a part of their profession. They were pointed in the bazaar as “The Safar man”. Safar meant travel. And gradually the man who did this was called “Safaru” This was later corrupted to Sapru.

There was a man living in our neighbourhood who started working for a living in the Water Works Department. In popular parlance, his job involved fixing water pipes and taps and most of the housewives referred to him as the “Nalka Man”. This word Nalka means water tap” And so the family was known as the Nalkas. Take the Surname Darbari. One of their ancestors was a courtier in the court of a King and this name was bestowed on him for identification and because of its royal association was immediately adopted. Names like Naqash, Kotru and Pahalwan or some of the examples of either professions or even other nouns becoming proper nouns by sheer passage of time.

Pandit Names Inc

Humour among the Kashmiri Pandits as its own subtle way of conveying the message. We know how to laugh and how to laugh at ourselves. Most surnames have a background and one of our most astute an intelligent scholars as put it in running message that one can call the saga of names. Thanks to the author M.K.Kaw, we know

now what most of the surnames meant then and how they have become a part of us as the following that he has penned down tells us.

Not very long ago, the Kashmiri Pandit possessed a robust sense of humour. If one of his ancestors had a large bottom, he had no compunction in being called a Mandal or if he had snatched something in scuffle, he basked merrily in the surname Thaploo. Today, it seems everyone wants to be called a Kaul, and a Dattatreya Kaul at that. Consequently, social introductions become tedious, with K.N.Kaul mering T.N.Kaul, through the medium of H.N.Kaul, with no one getting wiser as to who is meeting whom.

Time was when immediately you met someone, you placed him in the social hierarchy. Mind you, all (I mean, 99% of) our ancestors in recent Dogra times were clerks. All that differed was the department they were in or the kind of people or animals they dealt with, or the person they reported to. Let us face it. The Sultans were not like Sultan Yusuf Shah Chak; they were clerks to some Sultan. At the other end of the spectrum, the Oonts were not camel drivers; they merely collected taxes from them.

But one got a fair idea of the variety of departments our forbears were engaged in. If the Mirakhurs looked after the royal horses, the Hastwalooos were in command of the elephants and the Tufchis were gunners (or, more probably, clerks in the gunnery department). While the Langars managed the kitchen, there were some of them who watered down the rice till it became a vagra and consequently they earned the sobriquet Ogra.

Contrary to popular belief, some of us were enterprising enough to branch off into trade. The Karwanis sold peanuts, the Kalpashoos the ladies' head-dress, the Badams dealt in almonds, the Bazazs traded in cloth, the Bhans sold utensils and the Drals were honest brokers. There were other occupations too. The Mattus managed maths, the Haks grew the famous vegetable and the Hashias were specialists in the art of drawing margins on paper. The Zutshis were astrologers and the Sadhus were probably what their name signifies.

But, if the chief aim of a surname or nickname was to distinguish one Niranjan Nath from another, mere occupation would not do. An unsavoury episode of the past, however remote, was a juicier way of according distinction to a family. If an ancestor fond of attending wedding receptions uninvited, he and his progeny became Dudas for eternity. If he went a step further and stealthily took away a rice plate for the family back home, they became Thalchoor. If someone fell from grace and became brashtha, what better nickname than Braythh. If there was a gambler, the family earned the epithet Zaroo.

Another very endearing trait in the Kashmiri character is to lampoon a person by making fun of his personal appearance. If he is tall, he is Daraz, if short, Chhattoo. If fat, Mota; if thin, Naroo. If black, Kaw; if brown, Kachroo, if yellow, Gurtoo. If blue – eyed, he became a Braroo. If lame, Langoo; if hunchbacked, Kaboo; if six – fingered, Shangloo. If he looked like a parrot, Sharga, if like a sheep, Handu. If he was left-handed, Khashoo; if bald, Ganjoo; if with a crooked neck, Kariholu.

A person's nature also determined his nickname. If he poked his nose into the affairs of others, he became known as a Mam. If his temper was hot and fiery, he was called a Marchawangnoo. If he was tough, he became a Trakroo, if he always passed sour comments, he was Chaku and if he had a dry sense of humour he was Hakhoo.

My favourite surnames are Gamkhar and Razdan. I know that learned commentators have written fat tomes on each of these. But I would like to believe that all our ancestors were not as ill omened as they have been portrayed.

I think of the Gamkhar as a man with broad shoulders, which were always available to those in distress, so that they could weep while he wiped their tears away and whispered kind words into their ears to boost up their sagging morale.

And I don't care much for the laboured derivation of Razdan from Rajanaka. To my non scholarly mind Razdan does not seem to have descended from the Hindu period of our history. I wish to believe that a few at least of our ancestors would have been intelligent enough to be close to the royalty. Thus I would like Razdan to be what it literally means – the Keeper of the Secrets. That would make them something like the present day Directors of the Intelligence Bureau.

Why not?

Koshur Samachar, M.K.Kaw, October - 2002

What is in a name?

M.Bird was a cricketer, but he could not fly.

Birdwood was General, but not a woodcutter

His name is Archer, but he doesn't shoot arrows

Doolittle was a Pilot, but he did a lot

Goodman was a man, but we don't know whether he was good

Black was a man, but his skin was white

Lodge was a Rich Man, but his house was a mansion

He is called Horseman, but he drives a car.

John Major didn't wear a uniform, for he was a P.M

Shamsher Singh had no sword, he used a rifle.

Saudagar Singh was no shopkeeper but a farmer.

Shaitan Singh was no devil but a soldier.

Ajayab Singh was plain and not strange.

Pritam Singh was no love icon, but an ordinary man

Sher Singh was brave, but no lion.

Jai Sukh Lal Hathi was a man and not an elephant

Tara Chand is his name, but he is neither a star(Tara) nor the moon(Chand)

Khazan Chand is his name, but he has no treasure (Khazana)

Haldi Ram is his name, but he is not Haldi (Turmeric)

He is named Maska Lal, but he is no flatterer

Sandra Bullock is a girl with no link to the quadruped

*Andy Flower is a cricketer but he doesn't spout fragrance
Vedi was a man, a learned man.
He was a scholar, well versed in Vedas
People called him Vedi.
Came his brother from Varanasi, he had read two Vedas
Thus people called him Dwivedi
Along came a cousin from Prayag, he had read three Vedas
Promptly people called him Trivedi
And then came the fourth scholar, he had read all the four Vedas
What to call him, wondered and asked the villagers
Call him Chaturvedi said the village Wise man.
And so we have these surnames.*

16

Our Icons

Every community, ethnic or linguistic group of people have their own traditions and cultural histories. Their past comes to them in the form of the sayings and utterances of people past and present. So is it with Kashmiri Pandits. What follows are the names of those who even today and tomorrow can inspire us and those who beckon to us to emulate their examples.

Achievements of a persecuted people

“Kashmiri Pandits are mostly Saraswat Brahmins of ancient Aryan stock. They were custodians of one of the greatest heritages of mankind –Rigveda, Sanskrit, grammar and Shaivism. Hieun tsang (631 AD) and Alberuni (1021 AD) testify in their memoirs that Kashmir was a great centre of Sanskrit, knowledge and arts. Lovers of Sanskrit and knowledge flocked to the Valley to quench their thirst. Kashmir had everything of its own – philosophy, philology, cosmology, astrology, music and architecture. Utpaldeva didn’t know that his sharp intellect couldn’t stand before the proselytizing sword of Islam, which would flatten every ancient heritage in Kashmir to mix with dust. Sikander the Iconoclast masterminded a sustained campaign not only to kill the Brahmins who offered resistance to conversion but also destroyed temples, ashrams, libraries and great monuments. A huge mass of books was dumped into the Dal Lake during his reign. There were programs and ignominious persecutions. A large number of Brahmins fled and a sprinkling passed days in hiding.

“However, Zain Alabudin Badshah (1421-1471) felt extremely beholden to that great physician Shree Bhat who cured him of a dreaded disease and made him to recover from a moribund stage. When asked for rewards, Shree Bhat only desired rehabilitation of his devastated compatriots. He begged the king to allow Hindus to follow their religion without hiderance.

“Zain Alabudin did everything to rehabilitate the community. A large number of Kashmiri Pandits was absorbed in government jobs. With the passage of time, they adopted government service as a profession. They displayed extraordinary talent in mastering Persian, the official language. The class of Pandits employed in government jobs was called Karkuns. They did not like to renounce their religious duties and rites. They entrusted this task to a son-in-law or his descendants. Thus a denomination came into existence who became the custodians of Karmakanda (and gyanakanda). They were called Bhasha Bhat and later on Gore.

“The Karkuns acquired mastery of Persian and later of Urdu. There is enormous mass of poetry in Persian and Urdu, some servile in content. They developed a taste for Arabic and Persian idiom and imagery. To be the most obedient servant of the regime in power was an article of faith with a Karkun. They rose to the highest positions during the

Mughal rule, the Afghan occupation and the Sikh reign. They also rose to high positions during the Dogra rule.

“When English acquired ascendancy in official correspondence, Pandits excelled in mastering the language. Possessing a smattering of English was a symbol of knowledge and status. While each and every Muslim child was bound by an unalterable tradition to study Quran from the age of five or six, a Pandit child remained weaned away from his Sanskritic soil. Having been rooted out of sanskritic soil, the Pandit society drifted in relation to their responsibility in ensuring the sanctity and integrity of their shrines, which are unique and the oldest in the world. They considered Bhasha Bhatas inferior and pushed them into limbo. They sold the most sacred land of 3,000-year –old shrines to Muslims.

“During the first 55 years of the life of the Indian National Congress, for seven years, Kashmiri Pandits had been President – a remarkable record for a handful of people who migrated from Kashmir to the plains below “ – Jawaharlal Nehru addressing Kashmiri Pandits in September 1940 during his visit to Srinagar – Courtesy Naad 1995 and Vitasta 1981.

“The Pandits, who fled away from Kashmir in the 17th and 18th centuries, attained unimaginable heights in law, administration and politics. They acquired the mastery of Persian, Urdu and English. However, getting dazed by their glory, they completely forgot their miserable brothers in blood living in Kashmir. they discarded Kashmiri, Sanskrit, Vedas, Shaivism and the enchanting and most ancient shrines in the valley, which were facing despoliation and desecration. The first Prime Minister of India was a Pandit who contributed in a good measure to make Kashmir a cancerous issue.

“And the Pandits, who fled from the Valley in the 18th and 19th centuries, have been exulting at their achievements. Thus sings Shri P.N.Haksar, whose direct ancestor, Shrit Sita Ram, had fled from the Valley in the 19th century: “Our minds opened up. And our hearts too. Our vision got enlarged. India began taking shape. I came out of cocoon, took wings and fluttered in the fresh winds which were blowing about meI could see and feel the restlessness of the waves of the Indian Ocean pining to meet the waves of the Arabian Sea....” He couldn’t see the molten lava of intolerance flowing in waves from the north – west over the plains of Hindustan, reducing everything to dust and rubble.

“The achievements of Kashmir Pandits may be great but a people who contributed to the destruction of their roots culture and their are not worthy of emulation.”

Triloki Nath Dhar, Tonca, Goa, Koshur Samachar Sept. 29,2000.

Leaders

Kailas Dar

Pandit Kailas Dar was a product of the turbulent times that Kashmir went through especially during the second half of the 18th century. He was a leader at that time of the community, which rarely has supported a single leader. His statesmanship and skill for organization was of a very high order and he made the Pandits a force to a reckon with. When Blandkhan Sadozai was appointed Subedar of Kashmir in 1762 ,it was due to the efforts of Pandit Kailas Dar.

In those days, the tenure of the Subedar was always uncertain. Therefore, whoever came, Kailas Dar was there to support him. At that time, Ahmed Shah Abdali was ruling at Lahore and he went to meet him and to apprise him of the conditions in Kashmir. From Lahore, Kailas Dar marched with an army to conquer Kashmir from the clutches of a usurper named Nuruddin who fled and Kailas Dar marched into Srinagar in triumph. This was in the year 1770 and Kailas Dar was now at the height of his glory.

As was usual in those days, court intrigues were rampant and one day a disgruntled person by the name of Mir Fazal Kanth stabbed Kailas Dar in the open durbar hall. And so ended his career and his life which was immediately followed by another exodus of Pandits from the Valley as conditions worsened especially after the death of Ahmed Shah Abdali in 1772.

Dila Ram

Pandit Dila Ram was a man of high calibre and a giant among men, who combined in himself all the qualities, which go to make up successful statesmen. Firm, resolute, calm, with an abundant store of wit and humour, he held his own for a number of years against a number of unholy cliques that naturally grow wherever combat is fought on the plane of selfishness and against superior mettle.

Dila Ram held the post of Sahibkar (Senior official holding a key post) during the tenure of Haji Karim Dad Khan. About his calibre British traveller, adventurer and explorer, Forster, has written in 1780.

“This person of the Hindu sect possessed a more liberal disposition than is usually found in an Indian though perhaps I am so much biased by his indulgent treatment that my opinion may be thought partial. But his deportment seemed uniformly benevolent to all classes of people. With his companions, he was affable and good-humoured. He was humane to his domestics and he exercised with a reasonable temperance the duties of his office.”

Soon during the rule of Azad Khan, a new Subedar of Kashmir, Dila Ram, became the Prime Minister. An astute administrator, he revived the shawl trade and introduced what

was then seen as a novel method of affixing a *dag* (a stamp mark) on each shawl for which tax was paid. This was to prevent any malpractices by officials. Dag is also a word in Kashmiri and Urdu, which literally means stain- for example the stain of ink on a boy's white shirt is called a dag. Even today, the word is attached to the shawl industries and dag shawl pioneered by Dila Ram provided a fair deal to the shawl makers.

By 1785, Kashmir was again in turmoil and another tyrant Madad Khan assumed power. For some time, things went on smoothly but intrigues reduced the villain of the piece and an attack was made on Dila Ram, which he fortunately survived. In those days, Kashmir being under Afghan control, revenue accounts were submitted to Kabul and he took the opportunity to go there and was received very well by Tiamur Shah, the Kabul king.

Of course, Dila Ram was already known in Kabul and the King took him into confidence and one day asked why he had put tilak mark on his forehead. Quick came the reply that the mark resembling Alif was an indication of the fact that the God was one without a second. And why had he anointed his ear tips also with the same stain. Dila Ram replayed that the two marks were in token of two witnesses to prove a fact, according to Muslim law. Why a mark on his throat as well. Dila Ram replied that the mark signified that the person who denies the truth of his statement is to be hanged.

The following couplet was recited by Dila Ram to sum it up "Cast a glance over my face and look to my forehead, there you will find a mark which singles me out as slave of the Lord".

Dila Ram went back to Kashmir with honours heaped on him. The next Subedar of Kashmir was Mir Hazar Khan who created a record by his brutal and merciless treatment of Pandits. A reign of terror prevailed and his first victim was Pandit Dila Ram who was murdered at Kahnayar in 1793.

So ended the life and times of another Pandit, murdered because of his merit and honesty.

Nand Ram Tikku

Today and yesterday Afghanistan has been in the news. That being so could Kabul be for behind? Whether it was against Imperial Britain or Soviet Union or the Taliban, Afghans have rarely allowed any foreigner to wield power in their country.

Yet, there was one daring adventurous Kashmiri Pandit who went to Afghanistan and (today hardly anybody will believe this, but it is true) became the Diwan of Kabul. He was, history has recorded, Pandit Nand Ram Tikku. In today's parlance, that would mean Governor of Kabul.

He was an unusual man, combining in himself qualities of a soldier and statesmen, adviser and an administrator, dispenser of Justice and a farsighted man. It was unusual in those times for a Kashmiri Pandit to settle down in unstable Afghanistan where persecution of non-Muslims took violent forms.

So great was Nand Ram Tiku's influence and power that he struck a coin in his own name with the inscription "*Sim az mabud wa zarb az Nand Ram*".

This was a rupee coin known as Nand Ram Rupee and was in circulation in the tribal area of North Western Frontier Province (NWFP) apart from Afghanistan proper till 1905.

He was joined by others Pandits who also lived in Kabul. Among them was Pandit Daya Ram Kachru "Khushdil" father of Birbar Kachru, the historian.

Bala Kak Dhar

One of the most outstanding prominent leaders of the community, he was the Wazir-I-Wazarat of Kashmir. A famous landlord, whose ancestors were governors of Kashmir and had played a prominent role in the removal of the cruel Afghan rule in Kashmir. Mr.D.P.Dhar the prominent political leader, minister at both State and Central level, and diplomat extraordinary also belonged to this family.

So great was the influence of Bal Kak Dhar on the community psyche that often one would say "He thinks that he is a Bal Kak Dhar".

This is the same family to which belonged Pandit Bishen Narain Dhar who was the Congress President in 1911 and whose family had to leave Kashmir due to persecution. Despite that the Dhar family produced many Chief Ministers during the Mughal, Afghan and Sikh rule in Kashmir. Some of them were Kailas Dhar, Sahaj Ram Dhar and his son Ganesh Pandit Dhar, the latest and youngest in fifties and sixties of 20th century was D.P.Dhar., one time Home Minister of J&K State and Indian Ambassador to the Soviet Union.

Sahaj Ram

Amongst all the Kashmiri Pandits who rose to prominence during the Afghan period of Kashmir history, there is the personality of Sahaj Ram Dar who by dint of his farsightedness, sagacity and political wisdom, continued at the helm of affairs for a very long time. Kingships rose and fell in Kabul, Subedars were appointed and dismissed in Kashmir, rebellions occurred one after the other in Kashmir, but Sahaj Ram Dar continued in his office with his power and prestige undiminished.

And this went on for a number of years and during the reigns of many Subedars. In this, he can be compared to a statesman. Sahaj Ram was neither faithless nor an opportunist. He never turned traitor to his masters, but served them, honestly and loyally as long as circumstances permitted him to do so, but after their fall, he never betrayed them.

The relations of Kashmir with Kabul those days was that of a crown appendage and periodical accounts had to be submitted to the Afghan King, in addition to the annual tribute. Pandit Sahaj Ram as Diwan was in charge of the accounts also. We, therefore, find Pandit Sahaj Ram Dar next going to Kabul with the accounts of the country, which were to be presented to the King there.

But while crossing Indus in a ferry the pony, which carried the accounts, took fright and jumped into the river and got drowned along with the accounts. But unmindful of the loss of the accounts, Sahaj Ram Dar pursued his journey and on reaching Kabul sought audience with the King and related to him the mishap, but he undertook to prepare a duplicate from his memory within a short period of only four days.

This was done and the accounts were found to tally in every detail with the copy of the accounts, which was lying in Kashmir and later sent for from there. This pleased the King beyond measure. He bestowed a Khillat and the hereditary title of Diwan upon him. Besides this the villages of Dachhan Para and Marhama were bestowed upon him as Jagir in perpetuity. In addition to this, Pandit Sahaj Ram secured the Governorship of Kamraj for his brother Mirza Pandit, and the Illaqa of Deosar for Pandit Birbar. The latter, after making his appearance on the political scene, as we shall soon see, played a decisive part in the history of Kashmir.

Atta Mohammad Khan started his career as the Subedar with very great promise. Himself a man of simple habits, and deep religious convictions, he bestowed his earnest attention upon raising the material prosperity of the people of Kashmir. In this, he largely drew upon the administrative skill of his Diwan Pandit Sahaj Ram. Under the guidance and supervision of the Pandit, agriculture was improved, and during his regime bumper harvests came to be reaped after a period of decay and despair. Trade was revived as a result of administrative stability, which was established in a short period.

History of Kashmiri Pandits, Justice Jia Lal Kilam, 1955.

Raja Dina Nath

In 19th century many Kashmiri Pandits took up service in the administration of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and one of them Raja Dina Nath rose to become the Finance Minister of Punjab and survived through thick and thin, wars and upheavals to become an institution in his lifetime.

The ability to survive was personified by Raja Dina Nath whom an English officer called the "Talleyrand of the Punjab".

“Revolutions, in which Raja Dina Nath’s friends and patrons perished, passed him by; dynasties rose and fell, but never involved him in their ruin; in the midst of bloodshed and assassination, his life was never endangered; while confiscation and judicial robbery were the rule of the state, his wealth and power continually increased. His sagacity and farsightedness were such, he could perceive the signs of a coming storm, which warned him to desert a losing party or a falling friend.”

The Kashmiri Pandit Story of a Community in Exile by Kusum Pant.1987.

Pandit Birbal Dar.

(He freed the Valley free from Afghan oppression)

He was a pioneer of undaunted perseverance. P. Birbal Dar, was inducing Maharaja Ranjit Singh to take Kashmir, and the people in Kashmir had their wistful eyes turned towards the Sikhs that they might come and liberate them from the tyrannies of the Afghans. *Deva yiyih Sikga raj tarit Kyag* – (Would, that the rule of the Sikhs would cross over to us) – was then the popular lullaby of the mother to put her child to sleep.

When it became known that Sirdar Azim Khan had left Kashmir, P. Birbal Dar undertook the responsibility of paying any amount of loss incurred to the Maharaja if his troops failed in the invasion of Kashmir, keeping his son, P. Raja Kak Dar, as a hostage for the security of the performance of his engagement.

The Maharaja then sent over 30,000 troops in the charge of P. Birbal Dar to invade Kashmir. The troops were commanded by Raja Gulab Singh, Diwan Mirs Chand, Sirdar Hari Singh, Jwala Singh Padania, Hukum Singh and others. Sirdar Jubbar Khan arrayed his army against the Sikhs. A fierce battle ensued at the top of the Pir Panjal in which the Afghan were defeated. Another battle was fought on the plateau of Shopyan and in this Jubbar Khan was wounded and his troops were routed. Jubbar Khan then fled away and Kashmir fell into the hands of the Sikhs. On receipt of the report of victory of his troops in Kashmir, Maharaja Ranjit Singh bestowed robes of honour and other favours on P. Raja Kak Dar and sent him in a most dignified manner to Kashmir. The following couplet gives the chronology of this victory:

Birbal Pandit az sar-e-Kashmir

Kard ta dur in balai A’zim

Hatfi guft az pae tarikh

Chi baja kard Singh, fateh A’zim.

“Birbal from the head of Kashmir;

Removed away this A’zim (huge) calamity;

The angel said about the date –

How well the Sikhs accomplished victory over A’zim

Thus Kashmir, after a long period of 496 years, passed again from the Muhammadans to Hindus. The first Sikh governor was Diwan Moti Ram in 1819 A.D. and P. Birbal Dar was appointed as his chief adviser.

After one year, Maharaja Ranjit Singh invited the raises (aristocrats) of Kashmir. P. Birbal Dar, Mirza Pandit Dar and P. Sahaj Ram Dhar went to attend his Durbar. When they reached Daulatnagar, Mirza Pandit got an attack of cholera to which he succumbed. He was the brother of P. Sahaj Ram Dar and the latter felt the bereavement so deeply that he retired from the world and became a recluse. P. Birbal Dar alone went to Maharaja Ranjit Singh and presented before him the accounts of the revenue collected.

The Maharaja was pleased with him and granted him a *Khilat* and sent him to Kashmir with high honour on an elephant, P. Sahaj Ram Dar, went forth to receive him at the Kralapora Villages in his charge as *Mustajiri* and these were taken away from him by P. Birbal Dhar. Thereupon P. Ram Dar came and told Sirdar Hari Singh, who was then the governor of Kashmir that P. Birbal Dar had become very proud and did not care even for him. In course of time, enmity developed between the governor and P. Birbal Dar. The former falsely reported to Maharaja Ranjit Singh that P. Birbal Dar was intriguing with the Rajas of Muzaffarabad and other hilly tracts to rebel against the Sikhs.

Thereupon, P. Birbal Dar was dismissed from his post. P. Ganesh Dar, brother of P. Ram Dar, now became the Peshkar of Kashmir. He went at the head of troops to Skardu and subjugated the Raja there. He also succeeded in exploring the mines of jade and crystal at Astore. Consequently, Maharaja Ranjit Singh was pleased with him and granted him the village of Sir as *Jagir*. Afterwards, when he went to Lahore and presented the accounts of revenue realized during the three previous years to Maharaja Ranjit Singh, he was granted two other villages, Ramuh and Kachhipura, as *Jagir*.

Razdan Sahib

He was given a jagir by Maharaja Ranjit Singh during the Sikh rule. The story goes that for a certain ritual an eclipse was essential and Razdan Sahib who was a renowned holy man of Srinagar was approached by the emissaries of the Maharaja. Legend has it that he threw a silver thali into the sky, which blocked the sun and caused an eclipse thus paving the way for conducting the ritual.

The Jagir given by Maharaja Ranjit Singh to Razdan Sahib was developed and the garden on his land became a local landmark. He was essentially a saint and not much into worldly matters. It was a colonial style house set amidst a sea of greenery. His fame grew and the lane leading from the main road to his garden and house was aptly named as Razdan Kocha (Lane). Since we (Saprus) lived very close to his house we, the children, used to go past his house to go to the bazaar.

16

Our Icons In The Modern Period

Kashyap Bandhu

(Pandit Tara Chand Koul)

March 24, 1899-Dec.18 ,1985.

He was born in a small village called Geeru, which is 40 km from Srinagar. He was named Tara Chand by his parents and also acquired the nickname Bulbul. As a youth of 20, he left Kashmir to seek employment and started editing the Arya Gazette in Lahore from 1929. He was a Journalist, versatile teacher, writer, social reformer and perhaps the only leader of the Kashmiri Pandit community who was such a many faceted personality.

During his childhood, in addition to learning and lessons in the village school he would tend sheep and cattle of the house. His extraordinary intelligence was recognized soon and he would surely be consulted on the matters of importance. But soon he was to go to Srinagar for post-primary education. He would live with an uncle in Sheshyar Habbakadal – the Safayas. While being taken to Srinagar on foot his father while resting at Letpora took out his knife from the pocket and showed the sharpened edges to the young lad telling him that he would slit the throat of the lad if he came back home without completing his education. The lad remembered the scene vividly in his eighties as well.

After passing Middle Level examinations, he started job hunting while still studying. On being informed that the Revenue Minister was coming back from Gulmurg, he along with a few of his friends managed to appear before the Englishman at Narbal while he was resting. The young man was enrolled as a Shajrakash in the Revenue Department and sent to Kolgam Tehsil. For sometime, he was at Danow Kandi-Marg. along with the hope of getting another job under Maharaja's rule.

He later went to Lahore and came under the influence of the Arya Samaj Movement. Worked as a volunteer in Quetta and started using his pen against the establishment and in favour of the downtrodden. The power of his pen was soon recognized and he rose to become the Editor of the "Arya Gazette". Here he was renamed Kashyap Bandhu and he married Vimla. His rebellious nature made him land in the prison for the first time when he was arrested among others in Saunder's case, having come under Bhagat Singh's influence.

In 1931, he returned to Kashmir and took upon himself the task of rebelling against established customs, dress code, and political thinking of his brethren—the Kashmiri Pandits. This was the only brief period in the recent past history of Pandits when they remained united under one banner of Sanatan Dharm Yuvak Sabha. He held sway over the masses through his bold pen writing the sarcastic "Challant" and "Pagal ki Diary". The Pheran Pooch and Zooj gave way, so did the age-old custom of not marrying widows. Girls' education gained momentum and the Pandits danced happily to his tune.

But the rebel in him would not die. A brief communal incident at Kanikoot and then the downtown city impressed upon him the fragility of the KP's isolated political stand. Rebelling against the majority belief, he walked out of the Yuvak Sabha as well as the Martand, joined hands with Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah in 1938 and thus was born the National Conference. Pt. Jia Lal Kilam remained shoulder to shoulder with him. A fine bond of friendship grew between Mirza Beg and him probably because both had a rural background and had the problems of rural Kashmir uppermost in mind. The rebel in him did not lose any chance.

In the early forties, Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah while speaking to a Friday congregation at Hazratbal, spoke about the religion in a way so as to denigrate other religions as compared to Islam. Kashyap Bandhu along with Jia Lal Kilam resigned the same day from the National Conference. The Muslim friends had to do lot of cajoling and the tall man had to personally say sorry before the duo went back.

On the political scene, the forties were years of turmoil. Kashyap Bandhu was in and out of the Jail many a time. This gave him lot of time to use his facile pen. Kesri was first brought on the scene. The Government banned it. "Desh" followed Kesri. Both were edited by Kashyap Bandhu. During the post 1947 turmoil Bandhuji's priority was to attend to the needs of the migrants coming from areas devastated by tribals. He ensured that all the Pandits who had been forced to tear their sacred threads got it back through proper Yagnas at Maidan Chogol in Handwara. He ensured the safety of Sh.Keshav Nath Khaibri and family. This gentleman had married a Muslim lass of village Manzhar in Kopwara and lived there only. This incidentally was the only Pandit family in the whole of Manzhar / Halmatpora Nalla even up to the nineties.

Different people have given different reasons for his not being included in the first ever Cabinet headed by the Sheikh. As far as I know, the reason was the rebel in him. He would not succumb to pressure of influence and would follow his one-track mind decisions, which Sheikh thought was not good enough for his cabinet colleagues. Having been given the charge of Director General Dehat Sudhar and rehabilitation, he would always take his own decisions, although he was under the charge of Revenue Minister Mirza Afzal Beg.

Post 1953 scene, Kashyap Bandhu was incarcerated along with Sheikh and Beg. He refused to be influenced by G.M. Bakshi and although repeatedly cajoled by him, remained steadfast in his loyalty to the tall man. But lo and behold-when Sheikh took over the reins of power in 1975, he refused to join his cabinet because his one track mind believed Sheikh had taken a wrong decision.

Even between 1947 and 1953, the great man lived with Warikoo family only (with whom he lived right from early thirties) and drew a token salary of Rupees one hundred only and refused government accommodation or normal salary. Upon my enquiry, he told me that all National Conference bigwigs had once decided that they should live simply, preferably in two room cottages, around Polo ground and draw salary only as was

required and should avoid ostentation. This one-track mind gentleman was the only person to stick to the vow taken.

Upon being entrusted the job of development of Sonawari in 1964, he believed he had done his job by the end of 1967. Any amount of persuasion by Sadiq Sahib did not make him change his mind.

Dr. Rajiv Kumar, Vitasta, Calcutta, (1999-2000).

Pt. Shiv Narain Fotedar

A great political leader of modern Kashmir. Tall and imposing personality with a faultless diction in spoken English, Chairman, Legislative Council J & K, President J & K, K.P. Yuvak Sabha, Founder of "Martand". A great fighter for the cause of Kashmiri Pandit Community; Chairman, Gandhi Memorial College, Managing Committee. All his life he struggled to represent the cause of Pandits. Towards the end of his life, he felt that his political role suffered by confining himself to community politics only. He toured the whole world as India's Parliamentarian with ability and aplomb. A great memorable personality who was above all very human.

Pt. R.C. Kak

Mr. Ramchander Kak was the son of Pandit Keshav Nath Kak. He joined the civil service during the reign of Maharaja Hari Singh and by dint of his merit, intelligence and hard work, he rose to the rank of Inspector General, Customs, Minister in waiting and finally the Prime Minister of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Unfortunately for him, he became P.M just before the partition of India in 1947 A.D. It is said that as P.M of the state, he advised the Maharaja not to join either India or the newly created country of Pakistan, but to have a standstill agreement with both.

However, when the tribal hordes were unleashed by Pakistan, the Maharaja had to flee and his government collapsed. Sheikh Abdullah's National Conference took up the reins of government and Mr.R.C.Kak was arrested and prosecuted. However, the charges of corruption, and nepotism could not be proved against him and he had to be acquitted. When .Kak was produced in the court of law, he was humiliated by people, mostly Muslims of Srinagar, who thronged the court. They spat on him and called him Rama Hoon (Ram the dog or the the wolf). Later on, he was retired from Government service and was drawing pension from the state. Mr.R.C. Kak had married a European girl who adapted herself very well in the K.P family. She wore a saree & put on dejihuroo. She is

said to have followed all the rituals of a K.P family both social as well as religious in letter and spirit.

By N.N.Moza

*

Bazaz, Prem Nath

Born on July 13, 1905 Srinagar ed. BA 1927 m. Sona Batni; started as journalist by contributing to Lahore papers 'Aam' Paisa'; as Kashmiri Pandit leader was member Glancy Commission 1931; started 'Vitasta' 1932, Hamdard 1935, close associate of Sheikh Abdullah in 30's but parted company early 40's; set up Socialist League 1940, Kisan Mazdoor Conference 1944; editor 'Hamdard'; opposed Kashmir's accession to India; interned Oct.1947; extended Aug 50, settled in Delhi, also interned there: managing director 'Eastern Pharmacist' English monthly Delhi; member Steering Committee Sheikh Abdullah's people Convention; publications; "Freedom Struggle in Kashmir", "Daughters of Vitasta" etc.

The first Sher-e-Kashmir

To those of our contemporaries who are above fifty years age, the title Sher-e-Kashmir referred to Shekih Mohammed Abdullah the first Prime Minister of Kashmir. They may have also heard the story about the dialogue between the Sheikh and M.Gopaldaswamy Iyengar who was the Prime Minister of Kashmir between 1937 and 43. Iyengar is supposed to have asked him whether as a "Sher" which means Lion, he would prefer either to stay in the jungle or to stay in a cage as in a zoo, because these are the only two places where a lion can go.

However it needs to be recorded that the epithet Sher-e Kashmir was first assigned to the late Pandit Hargopal Koul in the late twenties, says Pandit R.K.Sher. This was for his undoubting nature and fearless temperanment who had the temerity to defied the Muslim aggressiveness when and where he stood like a rock without the least fear of getting killed. Pandit Hargopal was the maternal grandfather of late Pt.Shiv Narain Fotedar, the venerable leader of Kashmiri Pandits.

"Alas! The Pandit community could not produce a leader of the stature of Hargopal and Shiv Narain after they attained Nirvana. We thus reach the conclusion that the epithet "Sher-I-Kashmir" was borrowed by the Muslim Conference was for Late Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah from late Hargopal Kaul". (KS, June 1998)

Says Justice Jia Lal Kilam in his book "A History of Kashmiri Pandits" :

"In 1876,there was the terrible famine in Kashmir. Once a number of famine stricken people were being carried across the Wular Lake to adjoining villages. The boat capsized and some mischief mongers spread the rumour that the Government had purposely drowned the people, as it couldn't feed them. Someone complained to the Viceroy of India and suspicion turned on an influential Pandit named Hargopal Kaul. He

was a Pandit who had migrated to Lahore because of religious persecution and had recently returned to the Valley. The British Government sent an officer to hold an enquiry into Hargopal Kaul's role into the alleged drowning of local people. The Maharaja also suspected Hargopal Kaul to be an agent of the British Government, which was trying to annex his state to British India.

During the enquiry in the open durbar, Hargopal Kaul asked the British Enquiry Officer as to who his prosecutor was and who the Judge. On being informed that the State was the prosecutor and Judge, Hargopal Kaul said that it was queer justice that the same person should act both as the Judge and the prosecutor.

This retort angered the Maharaja so much that he wanted to assault Hargopal Kaul, but was persuaded by his courtiers from doing so. The British officer exonerated him, but the Maharaja (Ranbir Singh) sent him to jail along with his brother Pandit Saligram Kaul. They were interned in the Bahu fort in Jammu but managed to escape.

They went to Sialkot where they started a newspaper, which took a strong line of criticism against the Kashmir Durbar. The criticism stung and the Maharaja was advised to persuade the two brothers to come back, which they did.

It was not easy in those days to defy the power of the State, but Hargopal Kaul did it and he was the original, real Sher-e-Kashmir.

Kaul Brothers of Lahore.

Raja Daya Krishen Kaul

Pandit Lal Kishen Kaul was forced by religious persecution to leave the Kashmir Valley and migrate to Punjab in the early 19th century. He later Joined Maharaja Ranjit Singh's army and commanded one of his crack regiments known as Pindiwala Brigade which won laurels in the Battle of Sirhind. Before his death, he adopted Pt.Suraj Kaul who later rose to the position of Revenue Minister of the Imperial Indian Council. His youngest son, Pt. Daya Krishan Kaul, worked as his Secretary till his death in 1901.

In 1902, Pt .Daya Krishan Kaul became the Private Secretary to the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir. Thereafter, from 1910 to 1916, he worked as the Dewan of Alwar State, from 1916 to 1925, he guided the destinies of the Patiala State. He had tremendous ability as a statesman and was the main architect in the settlement of the dispute between the Patiala and Nabha States of Punjab.

Pt. Daya Krishan Kaul earned the titles of Dewan Bahadur, Raja K.B.E & C.I.E at the time when the British ruled our motherland. He showed tremendous enterprise and acumen as an industrialist in Punjab and executed various timber extraction contracts successfully. He set up the Jallo subsidiary industry and a match factory at Shahdara near

Lahore and at Baramulla in Kashmir. He also had a large agricultural property in Punjab and was very helpful to the poor farmers.

During Maharaja Pratap Singh's forty year-long reign, many modern reforms were introduced in the state. In 1902, Raja Daya Kishen Koul became the Raja's Private Secretary and took keen interest in starting a college in Srinagar with private effort and initiative.

Raja Hari Krishen Kaul (Prime Minister, J & K State, 1931-32)

He was the second son of Raja Suraj Kaul. He remained in Government service throughout after joining the statutory civil service in 1911. His compilation of the Census Report of 1911 was considered a piece of literature. He organized the Badshahi Mela in 1911 when the King Emperor visited India during the Delhi Darbar. He earned the titles of Raja, Rai Bahadur, C.S.I and C.I.E. from the British. He retired from service in 1924 as the first Indian Commissioner of Jalandhar Division in Punjab. In 1926, he was appointed member of the Economic Inquiry Committee of the Government.

Later in 1928, he was sent as Dewan to Bharatpur State. He went to Kashmir as Prime Minister in 1931-32. Subsequently, he was appointed Revenue Minister for some time. In 1939, he was selected as the Indian Representative to the League of Nations but, due to the outbreak of World War II in September 1939, the League was dissolved. He retired from active service in 1941.

Justice P.N.Bakshi, Koshur Samachar, September 98.

Journalism

Rameshwar Nath Zutshi : Crusader extraordinary

Today, journalism has become a profession. It was not always so. It started as a vocation and later turned into a crusade. Much later, it became a profession. The development of the press in India is closely related to the spread of English language from Calcutta, then capital of India in the late 19th century to the rest of India.

English language journalism developed initially as a method by which the British could keep themselves informed about the happenings within India. But once the technology of Gutenberg arrived, the language press also began to develop. The English press was initially British owned, but as the years passed from 1875 to 1945, Indians also began to launch newspapers in English which became the conduit and instrument for the dissemination of the Indian viewpoint during the freedom struggle.

Thus it was, that Moti Lal Nehru, a rising star of the freedom movement, in association with other leaders, decided to launch a newspaper at Allahabad in the second decade of the 20th century. The name of the newspaper was "Leader". To head this newspaper, they selected a brilliant proven journalist namely Dr. C.Y.Chintamani. Once launched, the paper became the voice of the Congress in U.P and Northern India.

Since newspaper or the press was not an industry at that time, but part of a crusade for freedom, there were no attractive scales of remuneration to induct intelligent young journalists to man the organization. However, there were others who did not look at the remuneration part of it, but as an opportunity to participate in the freedom movement. Several young men, fired by the zeal to serve the country through the pen, came forward despite lack of prospects in this new profession.

One of them was Rameshwar Nath Zutshi, a real low profile journalist of astounding calibre who served the paper under the guidance of the brilliant and fiery Chintamani. In fact, Zutshi was the brightest boy when he joined the paper in 1923. For 44 years non-stop, he worked for the paper without taking a single days' leave even when he was sick. Zutshi was born on Dec.24, 1896 and passed his M.A from the Allahabad University in 1919. For a short while, he worked as a lecturer in St.John's college Agra. Thereafter, he joined the Tribune at Lahore, worked for some time there and eventually went back to his own city Allahabad and joined the Leader.

After Chintamani retired from the paper, Mr Krishna Ram Mehta took over as the Editor. It was after Mehta that Zutshi took over as the editor. One of his greatest qualities was his patience and understanding especially with younger reporters and sub-editors. He would listen to their problems, give them advice and himself set an example which they could emulate. Many times, he got the best out of them by appealing to their sense of honour, to their pride and their professionalism. He was not just a boss, but also a friend, philosopher and guide.

Zutshi devoted his whole life to journalism. A life long bachelor, he was in love with life and his calling – journalism. The pen was his weapon both for offence and defence. For him work was worship. He died at the ripe old age of 84 on March 25, 1980, mourned by thousands who knew him and by colleagues who worked with him. His death was a loss to the profession. Many came before and many after him, but he shone like a star in the firmament and faded away like the good soldier that he was.

Wattal, Nandlal :

"In mass media," writes V.N.Narayanan, columnist and editor of repute, "learning is not a problem but ignorance is becoming a qualification."

"Humility and journalism," he says, "are a contradiction in terms. Next to judges, editors are perhaps the most arrogant and ivory-tower tribals in the modern world. What spurs them is power and quest for fame."

Nandal Wattal was an editor too, of genuine distinction, for five decades, but, during his times, ignorance certainly was not a qualification among journalists. So far as humility is concerned, it was his forte and it never got into any contradiction with his profession. All along his life, he was known for maintaining a low profile.

In the words of G.M.Sofi, Editor, Srinagar Times, "if one were to compare the calibre of Mr.Wattal with that of the present day journalists, one would be disappointed. Today there is glamour, allurements and much more. But journalism today is bereft of the soul, from which the society and social environment derived life." "By his manner and style of functioning, Mr.Wattal set an example for others to emulate," writes Sofi.

N.L.Wattal was one among those veterans who built the edifice of modern journalism in Kashmir in the footsteps of such pathfinders and old campaigners as Mulk Raj Saraf, P.N.Bazaz, Kashyap Bandhu, Gashlal Kaul, J.N.Zuthsi, B.P.Sharma and Maulana Masoodi. In those days of autocratic rule terms like freedom of press and right of free expression were not in vogue. To the princely rulers everywhere in the country, newspapers were like a red rag to the bull. Due to stiff controls, harsh censorship rules, and fines and other punitive measures for violation of rules, not many ventured into the hazardous field of newspapers, still in the nascent stage. Those who did, were the trail-blazers, who suffered many trials and tribulations to lay the sound foundations of newspaper culture in Jammu & Kashmir.

It was during those days that Mr.Wattal and many other enterprising and educated young men made their appearance on the scene of journalism. They included veterans like R.K.Kak, J.N.Sathu, Mir Abdul Aziz, G.A.Kashfi, P.N.Kanna, S.P.Sahni, Ved Bhasin, Om Saraf and others. As the years rolled by, many others joined the ranks. Each one of them left his own imprint on the path of journalism.

Mr.Wattal started his career with the daily Hamdard, a prestigious publication of the decade before independence, owned and edited by P.N.Bazaz. Hamdard was a tough training school for the upcoming journalists which is amply borne out by the fact that many a later veterans came out from the paper edited by P.N.Bazaz. Hamdard was a tough training school for the upcoming journalists, which is amply borne out by the fact that many a later veterans came out from the editorial desk of this newspaper. Later Mr.Wattal took over the editorship of daily Khidmat, official organ of the National Conference, and stayed with the newspaper till the last days of his life. Mr.Wattal moved over to Jammu in early 1990 and Khidmat was closed down after terrorism struck Kashmir .

Khidmat was a party organ, first of the National Conference and then Congress, which made its debut in Jammu & Kashmir in the early sixties when G.M.Sadiq took over the reins of the Government. Being a party paper, the scope of Khidmat was limited and it had to exercise certain restraints, yet Mr.Wattal gave it a distinct character, making it the most prestigious daily of its era in the State.

Writes G.M.Sofi, "Even though working for a party newspaper, Mr.Wattal built up an individuality of his own. Whenever he picked up his pen to write on political, economic and social issues, he did it with such finesse that while he kept in mind the party's viewpoint, he also made objective and correct assessment of the issues involved." "The editorial department of Khidmat", says Sofi, "became a training school for young journalists, some of whom later made a name for themselves."

Mr.G.M.Sofi was himself is a product of Khidmat, having been groomed by Mr.Wattal. So also were many others, including some, like Ghulam Nabi Turi and Mohammed Amin Pandit, who rose to higher positions in the Government media organizations.

R.K.Kak once told me that the first thing he read in the morning was the editorial of Khidmat. I have known many others doing it too. Mr.Wattal usually wrote long editorials, but they were highly absorbing, elaborate, educative and informative. When he handled a subject, he did it with in depth analysis and derived conclusions which were always apt to the subject and situation.

J.N.Sathu, a close friend and colleague of Mr.Wattal from Hamdard days, spoke of the "analytical mind" of Mr.Wattal and his "deep understanding" of the topics he took up for writing.

Avid Reader

"He was an avid reader of books and newspapers and kept himself abreast of latest developments. This helped him a great deal in his work," said Mr.Sathu.

"Some of his editorials," said Sathu, "may not have been palatable for the party whose paper he worked for, but this never deterred him from dissecting situations and issues to the best of his knowledge and arriving at unbiased and objective conclusions."

Said Mr.Sathu, "None of Wattal's contemporaries could deal with a topic as skillfully and as knowledgeably as he did. In fact as far as leader writing in the dailies was concerned, Wattal was undoubtedly the facile princeps."

Since Khidmat was always a party paper, many people disagreed with its views, but there was hardly a serious newspaper reader who could ignore the views editorially expressed by the daily.

Said Sati Sahini, "it is tribute to the professional competence and integrity of Mr.Wattal, that even though Khidmat changed hands from one party to another and from one party chief to another, he was always entrusted with the editorship of the paper."

Unmatched Respect

At one stage, Mr.Wattal had even offered to quit but he was dissuaded from doing so by the then Chief Minister, late G.M.Sadiq.

Mr.Sahini said party papers usually did not and could not build much credibility and Khidmat was no exception. But the respect that Mr.Wattal commanded among his fellow journalists, politicians and readers was unmatched. He said Mr.Wattal always edited a newspaper which belonged to the ruling party but no one could ever blame him of throwing about his weight, nor did he dance attendance on ministers or curry favours. In fact when a politician or a minister wanted to meet Mr.Wattal, he would go to the office of the newspaper. He would meet the party president or the Chief Minister only when asked to do so.

On the professional level, Mr. Wattal enjoyed cordial relations with every member of the press fraternity, young or old. He never got into professional rivalries or controversies and never sought any office in the professional organizations of editors and other journalists.

Describing him as a "gentleman journalist", Ved Bhasin said that "Mr Wattal never made compromises on professional integrity and honesty. He was a striking example of clean journalism."

He said Mr. Wattal upheld the tradition of "qualitative journalism" so assiduously established by his forerunners. Besides, in spite of being associated with the mouthpiece of the establishment, he never hesitated to put down his considered and mature views frankly, freely and honestly on important issues from time to time, Mr. Bhasin said.

After independence when Jammu & Kashmir came on the broadcasting network of India, N.L. Wattal's voice was often heard broadcasting "halat-e-hazira peh tabsurra" (commentary on current affairs) from Srinagar station of Radio Kashmir, which had a very wide listenership all over the State and in Pak-occupied Kashmir. His eloquence and his diagnosis of burning issues of the day, inspired many aspiring youths who dreamt of careers in journalism. I was one of them. But it was many years later that I had the privilege of personal acquaintance with Mr. Wattal. During the years immediately preceding eruption of terrorism, I would spend quite some hours with him in his office, especially after the daily Qaumi Awaz established its office in Khidmat House.

To me Mr. Wattal appeared to be a very humble and simple man, with the simplest of habits and least of needs. He had no pretensions whatsoever, and talked less and listened more. He was always eager to learn, and preferred to ask question rather than answer ones. By nature he was not gregarious, spent almost his entire time in his office and interacted with his professional colleagues only occasionally. But he would spend a lot of time reading serious books. Sitting and conversing with him across his table in his office, was a pleasant experience, and, when he opened up, he had a lot to say on the developments and events of the past six decades.

Many years back, during a radio interview broadcast from Srinagar, Mr. Wattal said that journalism was essentially an "intellectual pursuit", and in order to maintain its quality and class, it should not be allowed to degenerate into a purely commercial exercise. He was highly optimistic about the future of journalism in Kashmir, saying that the Valley's soil was "very fertile" for the growth of a "healthy, free and forward-looking press".

Wattal Saheb died a peaceful death in September 1997 during the eighth year of his exile from Kashmir, but he died an unhappy man. As is the case with all other displaced Kashmiris, life of homelessness had diminished and depleted his entire being. He talked still less, mingled and interacted with lesser number of people and spent his time mostly indoors. He pined for Kashmir and longed to go back to his home which he had built out of a lifetime's earnings, but in which he was not destined to live.

Education

What Tyndale – Biscoe was to modern school education in the Kashmir Valley, Raja Daya Krishen Koul was to collegiate education. He opened the doors to higher education for Kashmiri Pandit boys and later girls by helping to start a degree college. Hitherto, Pandit boys would complete their matriculation and get clerical jobs. Now after 1907, the way was cleared for higher education.

At that time, to keep up with British India, English was slowly but steadily introduced in all the central offices of the State Government. Maharaja Pratap Singh had not been for some time in the good books of the British Government and his direct powers had been entrusted to a council headed by his brother Raja Amar Singh. This council had members from the Punjab Provinces and one of them had made the astounding suggestion that no college should ever be opened in Kashmir as it would be unwise to impart higher education to the people of a frontier state.

But, another member of the council, Pandit Raja Suraj Koul opposed it and it was his son Pandit Daya Krishen Koul who spearheaded the effort to set up a college. It was 1906 – 07 that the Sri Pratap Hindu College was opened in Srinagar and the first batch of Pandit boys graduated in 1911. While this was a big step forward, degrees were awarded only in Arts subjects. There was no science faculty available in S.P. College as it becomes known later (the word Hindu was dropped and the college was eventually taken over by the Government). It was only in 1934-35 that efforts were successful and in 1938 the first batch of science graduates came out of S.P. College.

Master Samsar Chand Kaul: Great Ornithologist Of Kashmir

MASTER Samsar Chand Kaul (1883-1977) was a renowned educationist, ornithologist and environmentalist of his time, when subjects like bird watching and study of natural history were unknown in Kashmir. By profession, he was a teacher in then C.M.S. School, Fateh Kadal, later Central High School, Srinagar, continuously for 65 years and developed interest among the students in the natural history around; besides teaching of his usual academic subjects.

His keenness in inculcating aptitude among the students towards glorious and everlasting surroundings of mountains, birds, flowers and forests was appreciated by the then British Principal of the School, Mr. C.E. Tyndale Biscoe, who, while writing a foreword to Master Samsar Chand's book "Beautiful Valley of Kashmir & Ladakh", wrote as under:

"I am most grateful to Samsar Chand for having taught his boys to love birds through his teaching of natural history".

Illustrious Teaching Career

His teaching career in the C.M.S. School, was of the highest educational order. During his long span of teaching career, he traveled to every nook and corner of the Valley along with the students, both native as well as foreign, and his colleagues. He scaled several mountain peaks of the Pir Panjal range like Mahadev, Harmokh and Kolahoi and undertook trekking high-altitude lakes like Tarsar, Marsar, Gangabal, Kolsar, Vishnu Sar, Kausar

Nag, Sheeshram Nag, Har Nag Valley and Kolahoi glacier and Harmokh glacier, meadows like Toseh Maidan, Bungus, Allpathar, Jamia Galli, Beasam Galli, Gureiz Valley, stepped over boulders and rocks with the students.

This close and practical encounter with nature, in calm and tranquil atmosphere, provided him with ample opportunities to study, to know and to probe into the history of nature and its geographical transformation, which he happily shared with the students accompanying him in these adventures. As a teacher, he had developed his own methods of imparting education. Even on mountains, hills and meadows, he would explain to his students on the spot the forms of fossils and their formation, he would show them various types of rocks which he came across during trekking or at camping sites. In forest areas, he helped the students to identify various kinds of trees by the shape of their leaves and taught them how to calculate the age of the trees by the number of annual tissue rings in the trunks.

Bird Watching as Hobby

His principal area of interest was ornithology, which needed immense patience and perseverance. While on a picnic or in a summer camp among the pine and fir trees in the Valley, he would devote most of his time in watching birds, their little ones, their art of making nests and their melodious notes. He had acquired, with the passage of time, experience to imitate their chirping. For bird watching, he had selected a few places in the Valley where he invariably preferred to go in seasons.

These places were Hokursar, Anchar Lake, Feroze Nalla (Tangmarg), vegetative strip willows and poplar trees – where birds of all varieties, migratory and local, were conspicuous by their presence. He would spend hours there with a binocular to take close views of birds in their nests or on branches of trees and would immediately jot down his observations in a notebook. Many bird watchers of world fame, like late Saleem Ali from Bombay, joined him in such experimentation in Anchar Lake as well as in Dal Lake.

Bird watching became his regular activity and he kept his eyes open for birds in high-altitude meadows and mountains during trekking. In mountains ranges, he came across Himalayan black bulbul, Himalayan whistling thrush, Woodpecker, hoopoes, Kingfisher, jungle crow, sandpiper, turtle doves, red-bowed finch, Himalayan brown dipper, Indian bush chat, blue headed rock thrush, Stoics mountain finch and mountain pigeons.

Master Samsar Chand had a flair for studying wild flowers, plants and mountain herbs which he found during his trekking in meadows and pastures in the mountainous ranges of Kashmir. He made it a point to collect samples of these wild flowers, herbs and plants, and would carefully preserve them in between the leaves of his diary in a scientific manner till his return to his residence. These plants were later studied with the help of expert professors of Botany. This way he was able to identify many plants, flowers and herbs during his trekking and would inspire his students to explore and admire the floral beauty.

His collections included flowers like Marino Longifolo, Morino Couterians, Dotentillo, Anemone Tetrascaple Jueunda, Carydalis Cahsemirians, Astra Falconeri and herbs like Indigoffera Lereantha, Sassurealappa, Artemisia. Salviashien, which were located in clusters on the high mountain ridges. These herbal plants were preserved by him in grass-made baskets at his home and were gradually used for curing of joint pains, skin disease, cold and cough, etc.

Development of Kobutar Khana

With the passage of time, he developed acute interest for the collection of so-called natural treasures and made numberless visits to the remotest and inaccessible areas of the Valley and collected a huge quantity of flowers, herbs, fossil rocks, lime stone, drift roots, plant leaves, hydro plants of lakes, bird nests, egg shells of birds and feathers which were preserved in a systematic manner in cupboards in the school museum called Kobutar Khana. It was the room where he taught geography. The room had been converted into a full-fledged natural history room. The ceiling of Kobutar Khana was covered with large-sized paper with stars, galaxies, planets, moon and constellations printed on its sky-blue black-ground, which gave the impression of a starry sky. Models of British ships like Drudkot and Titanic were also kept in the museum.

A part of his collection was meticulously maintained by him in large-sized albums at his residence in Motiyar, Rainawari. Their characteristics, date and place of procurement were skill fully and neatly written below each sample. While skipping over the pages of these albums, one would get so captivated, as if one was actually loitering in the high mountains of Kashmir. He would often take foreign friends and his acquaintances around the school to show them the museum developed and maintained by him.

Many foreign guests were deeply impressed by his work and honored him by nominating him as a member of National Geographical Society, Washington, Royal Geographical Society, Canada, and Society of World Watchers, England, in late 1950s. His dedication and sincerity towards his school and its students was so much that he would pass on gift cheques, whenever received from foreigners, to the school account for the welfare and upkeep of the School.

As an Author

With such rich experience of natural history and sound background of the areas he traveled and trekked with students and foreign nationals, he presented an extensive vivid narration in lucid and facile language in his most delightful books; “Beautiful Valley of Kashmir & Ladakh”, “Birds of Kashmir” and “Srinagar & Its Environs in 1940s.

He became an authority on birds of the Valley and was often called for programmes on birds by Radio Kashmir, when Mr. P.C. Chatterjee was the Station Director, AIR Kashmir, from 1955 onwards. He delivered many talks on birds to foreign tourist groups. His contribution in cultivating a habit among boys for natural history and to develop a sense of appreciation for beauty around them, earned him a foreign travel across the Bay of Bengal to Burma in 1935 at the school expenses. His students understood the pains and

feelings of caged birds and dressed the wounds and treated the wounds of the birds and animals found on the wayside.

Another glorious aspect of his personality was his deep involvement in spiritual pursuits. Compassion and humanism were his hallmarks. He had imbibed the traits of the missionary zeal by emulating with British people like late Mr. Tyndala Biscoe, pioneer of education in Kashmir, his son, Mr. Eric Biscoe; the late Col. A.E. Ward, the late Jacob Sahib, Rev. R.D. Thompson; Dr. Smyth Morris; Mr. B.D. Coventry, then Chief Conservator of Forests and many others who visited Kashmir in the pre-independence period. He taught innumerable poor boys and educated them without any kind of remuneration in return and took to such selfless path to satisfy his own inner conscience.

Besides being a scholar of Kashmir Shaivism. Master Samsar Chand was a noble soul totally devoted to God. Parikrama of Hariparbat, followed by prayer and meditation, were regular features of his daily life till his last breath. In the family, he guided his grandchildren in learning Sanskrit mantras from his scriptures before going to bed and entertained them with stories from Bible, Hindu religious scriptures and some interesting gleanings from Rajtarangini or from Kashmir history particularly of Pathan rule which was dotted with clumsy whims and fancies of Pathan Governors in the Valley.

Love for Outdoor Life

He had wonderful aesthetic tastes to enjoy life. In summer vacation, when his school was closed, he would plan programmes for outings along with his wife and grandson. Visiting Khirbhawani was generally preferred because of its being a secluded area with spiritual grace and cool atmosphere of Chinar trees. Here he found harmony and peace for his spiritual exercises. Sometimes he also visited health resorts like Achabal, Anantnag, Gautam Nag, Nag dandi and areas of old monument sites like Kothyar Won, Parihaspore and Martand. He believed that God was within one's self and did not feel the need to roam about on pilgrimages in search of God.

In 1965, he went to Rishikesh, where he attended the discourse of Swami Mahesh Yogi on Vedanta. While listening to the discourse, he stood up and sought Swamiji's permission to recite a 'shloka' from Utpalastutaveli, a book on Kashmir Shaivism. Hailing Masterji's knowledge of Shaivism, Swami Mahesh elucidated the aspect of Kashmir Shaivism in detail to the gathering of Indian and foreigners there. Though being a student with Persian –Urdu background in his graduation, yet Masterji had developed great acumen for scientific knowledge and natural history. He was also well versed in religious philosophies and an exponent of Kashmir Shaivism. His urge to learn Sanskrit made him a disciple of learned Sanskrit teacher, late Shri Govind Joo Bhatt of Rainawari, and enthusiastically joined Gita classes on every Sunday at Vital Bhairav Temple. Practical astronomy was his other field of study and observation.

An Ardent Star-Gazer

Kashmir is endowed with lush green mountains, snow-capped peaks, grating rivulets, gushing streams, dense forests, cool breeze and a beautiful canopy of crystal blue sky. The sky during the cover of darkness appears like a sat umbrella studded with countless glittering diamonds. On such starry nights, Masterji used to point out various stars like

Great Bear, Polar Star, Milky Way and other galaxies to his students while camping at Gangabal, Sonamarg or Gulmarg and would narrate details about these planets to students.

Despite having attained expertise and excellence in ornithology, Master Samsar Chand could not get due recognition either from J & K Government or from the Centre. Leading political men and personalities of the state, like late Bakshi Ghulam Mohd. G.M. Sadiq, Agha Ashraf, P.N. Jalali, Bashir Bakshi, Dr., Nassir Shah, Late Prof. M.S. Want and Prof. Ansari were some of his distinguished students in C.M.S School.

However, the British Government favored him with the honour of a small war pension; but in the state where he gave wider dimensions to the education of the students, he passed away in oblivion.

Surender Kaul, Koshur Samachar, April,1999) (The author is Master Samsar Chand's grandson)

Shanker Kaul

While Tyndale Biscoe may be regarded by history as the torchbearer of knowledge and opening a window for Kashmiris to the world outside through the English language, his many disciples were Kashmiri Pandits who carried forward the torch to spread knowledge and communication to the community.

Among those in whom he had utmost confidence, were two members of the community namely Pandit Shanker Koul (CMS, Fateh Kadal) and Sridhar Bhat (CMS Anant Nag).

Shanker Koul came to the Mission School, Fateh Kadal as a student along with two other boys from the State School in 1892. And learnt on the very first day, the real meaning of education at the hands of Biscoe Sahib.

“..... Their first morning's work was finished when the bell rang for them to go to the playground for the twenty minutes' exercise, drill, boxing and gymnastics.

When I ordered my class to shut their books and to go the playground, these three new boys said that they had come to school to learn and not to play. So I told them that this school was not a lunatic asylum and that, if they did not wish to have their bodies trained, they had better return at once to the state school. I then forced them downstairs to the playground and put them in line with the squad fronting the parallel bars and, when their turn came to perform, they refused to mount the parallel bars. So I took out my watch and told them that I would give them five minutes to think the matter over and then something would happen. Something did happen. Shanker Koul was on the parallel bars but his arms were too weak to hold himself there, so two boys were called to support him on each side.

When this first exercise was finished, we dealt with the other two newcomers in the same way. All three boys accepted this treatment with good grace, and, later on, all three became gymnastic instructors and thankful that they had come to the school.

To speak of Shanker Koul's life at the C.M.S schools and the enormous amount of useful work and brave deeds that he has performed would fill volumes. He was the leader of the boys at fires in the city, at epidemics of cholera, and when the Jhelum river overflowed its banks, causing destruction and distress all around. He was in the van too in preventing cruelty to animals, and in rescuing women and girls from impure devils. He also did useful work in standing up to the state officials when they tried to harm our schools and was always ready to join battle with anyone who decried the school.

He along with Sridhar Bhat spearheaded social reform education for widow marriage and unreasonable tenets of orthodoxy. When the first widow marriage of two widows was celebrated, it was Shanker Koul and Sridhar Bhat who led the procession in the face of stiff opposition from the orthodox section of the community in 1928. Subsequently, a great leader appeared on the scene in the form of Kashyap Bandhu who rendered yeoman service in the field of social reform.

Shanker Koul had also the distinction of being elected as a member of the Municipal council in 1916.

Sridhar Bhat

He was a contemporary of Shanker Koul, but belonged to Anantnag. He came to the Mission School there as a student and imbibed the qualities that Biscoe Sahib had prescribed to make a real man. He was one of the shining examples of students from rural background who believed with all his heart in the school motto "in all things be men".

After having been a student of the school, he became a teacher in same school. Biscoe who had never regretted his decision of appointing Shanker Koul as the Headmaster of the Mission School at Fateh Kadal applied the same formula when the time came for the appointment of Headmaster at Mission School, Anantnag. He selected Sridhar Bhat for the post. Why? Let Biscoe Sahib himself answer.

"He (Sridhar Bhat) possessed outstanding character for courage, kindness and determination and his great joy in life was that of up lifting the Kashmiris."

Guru – Shishya

Teaching, the wise say, is a noble profession. While the first teacher is the mother, those who come later mould the child into a man or a woman. In a miniscule community, the one profession which has attracted the genius of the

Pandits, is the teaching profession. While there were thousands in the ranks, we give below the names of a few. There were many more and their selfless service has to be counted when assessing the worth of the community.

17 Martial Pandit

A Kashmiri Pandit is generally identified with learning, reading, writing, languages, scholarship, diplomacy, law and all those skills that signify the need for intelligence and peaceful environment. For the present generation, this impression has gained ground perhaps because of the 101 years of peace, tranquility during the rule of the Dogra dynasty.

It might surprise the present generation to know that Pandits also joined the military service as a means of earning a living. In the last 200 years, the Afghan rule, the rise of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the Sikh rule over Kashmir has dominated our thinking about military service.

Says Justice Jia Lal Kilam in his pioneering work entitled “A History Of Kashmiri Pandits”:

“Kashmiri Pandits in those days (during 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries) freely entered military service. They found their way into Mohamedan, Marhatta, Sikh and English armies. For instance in various writings we find:

a) Bandai Dargah Rupchand Parimoo Sakini Kani Kadal dar Amli Nawabi Zain Khan Bahadur 2) Anand Ram Valoo hamrahi Lashkari Zain Khan Bahadur dar Risalai Qassim Khan 3) Mehar Chand Kaul Sakini Bagdaji Minmahlati Rainawari hamrahi Lashkari Zain Khan Bahadur.

b) Banda Rupchand 2) Bhawani Das 3) Heeraman Pasndit 4) Sada Kaul hamrahi Lashkari Mohammad Said Khan Bahadur Rustam Jang Bahadur.

c) Narain Pandit Sapru 2) Vishinath Pandit Sapru 3) Zind Ram Kaul, Hamrahi Lashkari Sidiq Beg Khan Bahadur.

d) Thakur Das Pandit Sapru 2) Fateh Chand Kaul 3) Sobha Shanker 4) Gopinath Chhachabali 5) Pandit Daya Ram Walad Zind Ram.

This gentleman bore the title of a Raja.

e) Raja Sahib Ram Kaul 2) Banda Bishnath and 3) Bhawani Shanker hamrahi Lashkari Murshid Zada Ifaq Nawab Momamaduddoullah.

f) Pandit Gangaram Bath hamrahi Lashkari Ambajee.

g) Bandai Dargah Ram Narain Kaul uruf Kharu hamrahi Babujee Scindhia Bahadur.

h) Heera Lal Zutshi hamrahi Buhl Sahib Kidar Aqbi fauji Lake Sahib rawana shuda bud.

i) Kishen Chand Kaul hamrahi Lashkari Fraser Sahib.

j) Ajudhianath hamrahi Thomas Metecalfe Sahib

Note: The writings referred to here are to be found in an old Bahi of the Panda of Kashmiri Pandits at Kurukshetra. It is customary for a pilgrim to write about his arrival in the book maintained by the Panda.

1. Kashmiri Pandits in the 18th and 19th centuries by J.L. Kilam.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a very progressive ruler who realized that the Europeans, especially the English and the French were far more advanced than the Indians specifically in the art of war.

He had modelled his army on European lines. There were many French Generals serving in his army, chief amongst whom being Ventura and Allard. Ventura was in charge of the Maharaja's Fauji-Khas, which was considered to be the flower of the Sikh army (Today, they would be called Special Forces, or Commandos, or SAS or Green Berets). He was assisted by a Kashmiri Pandit, the son of Pandit Ganga Ram, Adjutant General Diwan Ajudhya Prashad who had shown considerable skill in handling military matters.

During Ventura's absence on leave, Ajudhya Prashad was placed in full command, led successful military expeditions against hill chieftains. After his return from France, Ventura paid glowing tributes to the military genius of the Pandit, and remarked that he had found the troops in a better spirit than when he had left them in charge of the Pandit. After Ventura's final exit, Pandit Ajudhya Prashad was placed in independent command of these troops.

There is no use in multiplying names of the persons who were prominent at the Sikh court. But even then, there is one person whose mention would not be out of place here. We mean Col. Badri Nath. He migrated from Kashmir during the Afghan rule, and got enlisted as a sepoy in the Sikh army. He gradually rose to the rank of a colonel. He was second in command to general Hari Singh Nalwa when the latter wrested Peshawar from the Barakzais.

The founder of the Dogra dynasty Maharaja Gulab Singh, died in 1857 and was succeeded by his son Maharaja Ranbir Singh. While Gulab Singh concentrated on consolidating his new kingdom, his son after peace had been completely restored, set about implementing much needed reforms. Since security was of paramount importance, he also concentrated on modernizing his army.

The army was about forty five thousand strong and was very ably led by Dogra and Gurkha officers. This army proved its mettle in the Gilgit and Ladakh campaigns. The terms of command were all in Sanskrit . A Research Department was also started. In all this, he was very ably assisted by his Prime Minister, Diwan Kripa Ram, who was a son of Diwan Jwala Sahi, has produced a report on the Kashmir valley in 1870 A.D., which can even now be read with great benefit. The report contains a well- ordered treatment of all the subjects which concern the valley. In producing this report, he was assisted by a number of Kashmiri Pandits.

1. Mashahiri Kahsmir by Fauq. See also Punjab Chiefs by Griffin.

Pen Warriors

Maharaja Gulab Singh once reproachfully remarked – “The Pandits are cowards and lack martial spirit, hence they shirk taking to the Military service.” A Pandit being present at once replied – “Pray, thank Heaven, the Pandits do not take to military service, for do you not remember what one single Brahmin (Paras Ram) did in ancient times after he wore his belt and sword”? The Pandit’s tenacity, adaptability and elasticity as regards his political environment have been construed to mean cowardice. He has survived the most ruthless, barbarous and savage rule, which he was subjected to in the past. Given the same destructive and fatal circumstances to live and work under, can there be found a people, other than the Kashmiri Pandit, who could endure this inhuman rule for six odd centuries and survive it?

In the last quarter of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, contrary to popular belief, many Pandits joined the British Indian Army. One of the first was admittedly not a combatant but a doctor. His name was Piaray Lal Atal. At the time, when he was killed, he held the rank of Major. He was a member of the Indian Medical Service (IMS), which the British had constituted in India. As soon as World War I began and the Indian Expeditionary Force was sent to France in 1914, many from the IMS were drafted into Military Service.

During the initial period of the fighting, Major Atal was killed in action in November 1914. It needs to be mentioned here that the Atal family has contributed quite a lot to the nation in terms of both Civil and Military Service. His younger son Brig. Hira Lal Atal commanded the 77 Para BRIGADE IN Zo Jila campaign in Oct-Nov 1948. His elder son was K L Atal who retired as a Lt. General.

Overall, the Kashmiri Pandit community has produced two Service chiefs, namely, General T.N.Raina, Chief of Army Staff and Air Chief Marshal S.K.Kaul, Chief of Air Staff. Lt.General Moti Dar also retired as the Vice Chief of Army Staff. For a small community of less than half a million it is quite a creditable achievement and performance. In addition to these, the community has produced its fair share of heroes whose gallantry awards and self-sacrifice testify to their valour.

Lt. Gens---A K HANDU, Hreday Kaul, Madan, Hazare,Atal, B M KAUL, Moti Dar.
Major. Gens. Vijay Aga, Bharat Kaul, AVSM, VSM.
Brigadiers Tej Kaul, VSM, Bushan Sapru
Colonel Kuldeep Kumar Tikku, SM
AF---Air Comm. Ganju, AVM Challu., Air Commodore M.N. Kaul, and many others.

Flying Officer Khemendra Nath Kak (K.N.Kak)
Indian Air Force
Distinguished Flying Cross (D.F.C)

Pandit Ramchandra Kak (R.C.Kak) was a product of the late 19th and early 20th century transition of Kashmir Valley into the modern age. He was one of the earliest graduates of S.P.College, his degree being awarded by The Punjab University. In those days, Kashmir had no university of its own and of sheer necessity colleges and high schools were affiliated to the Punjab University.

He started his career as a Librarian and soon blossomed into an archaeologist. For some time, he was also the Inspector General of Customs for the state. Later in his career he became the Minister in Waiting to the Maharaja and later he crowned his career by becoming the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir.

He was the second Kashmiri Pandit to become the Prime Minister of the state in the first half of the 20th century, the first one being Raja Hari Kishen Kaul in 1931.

In the words of Justice Jia Lal Kilam, Kak's fame rests most on his contribution to archaeology. " He is a great research scholar and is responsible for bringing Kashmir on the archaeological map of India. He has, besides editing many ancient Sanskrit texts, written a monumental book namely "Ancient Monuments in Kashmir." *

Pandit Kak had three sons of whom one Khemendra Nath Kak was keen on flying. The Second World War was on and he joined the Indian Air Force. He already had military training and discipline when he was admitted into the Prince of Wales Military College, Dehra Dun in 1936. He joined the IAF and was posted to the elite and famous No.1.Squadron .

The Squadron had already covered itself with glory under the leadership of Squadron Leader K.K.Majumdar during its first tour of operation in Burma in the early months 1942. Flying Officer K.N.Kak joined the Squadron in August 1943 when it was posted to Burma for its second tour of operations under the command of Squadron Leader Arjan Singh.(2003) Marshal of the IAF, a rank equal to that of the Field Marshal in the Army)

This Squadron spent a record 14 months in operation and bagged seven DFCs and many more mentioned in dispatches. Kak completed 206 operational sorties within a period of eight and half months. He was awarded the DFC. After the war was over, this Squadron was sent to North Western Frontier Province (NWFP) and Kak was killed instantaneously as a result of a flying accident while carrying out practice aerobatics at Miram Shah on June 4th 1945 at 2.00pm. The accident took place near the aerodrome.

The funeral took place at Kohat on June 5th 1945 at 6.00,p.m. according to Hindu rites and he was accorded a ceremonial service honour with the coffin being carried by officers and men of his squadron. A firing party was also provided by the personnel of the Station.

So here was a Pandit Warrior who fought in the war-torn skies of Burma against the formidable Japanese Air Force. No mean achievement this. He came through the havoc unscathed and was destined to die in a flying accident. The Gods must have decided this. Remember what happened to General George S. Patton, commander of U.S III Army in Europe. He fought the war, defeated the Germans and came out unscathed, only to die in a road accident when his Cadillac was hit by a car. Nearer home, Wing Commander K.K.Majumdar, who fought in Burma in 1942 and in the invasion of Europe in 1944, came home unscathed with a DFC & Bar, also died in an air accident in Lahore in 1945.

**Flying Officer Khemendra Nath Kak (2004), Pilot no.1 (RIAF) Squadron
Citation**

(This Officer displays high degree of skill, courage and determination. His ability as a technical reconnaissance pilot is outstanding and on most occasions he has brought back valuable information. During the monsoon, he completed many sorties in a very foul weather with great coolness and devotion to duty. The excellent oblique photographs taken by him have been most useful. On this front, F/O Kak has completed 206 sorties within 8 ½ months.” Copy of letter dated 6th June 1945 from Wing Commander A.M. Engineer, Royal Air Force Station, Kohat, to R.C.Kak.)

Letter to R.C. Kak

“Before you received this letter, you will have received my telegram informing you of the very sad death of your son flying officer Khemendra Nath Kak, D.F.C. He was killed instantaneously as the result of a flying accident while carrying out practice aerobatics at Miran Shah on 4th June, 1945, at 1400 hours. The accident happened near the aerodrome.

“The funeral took place at Kohat on the 5th June 1945 at 1800 hours, the service being conducted by local Brahmins at the cremation found, after which his body was cremated in accordance with Hindu rites. Full service honours were awarded to him, the coffin being carried by Officers and men of his squadron, a firing part was also provided by the of this station (Miran Shah, NWFP). I am enclosing a photograph of the funeral.

“Your son Khema joined his present posting in August 1943. During 1944, when the squadron was on operations in Burma, he did splendid work and was decidedly outstanding in every kind of job assigned to him. This courage and initiative during the operations was exemplary. Well-deserved distinction was granted to him by a mention in dispatches and the award of the much-coveted Distinguished Flying Cross.

“ Your son had every quality of a leader and an officer. His kindness and sincerity endeared him to everyone who came in contact with him.. All officers and men of this station wish me to convey their deepest sympathies on the death of your gallant and beloved son.

CHINDITS

Captain Moti Lal Katju, MC

77 Para Brigade

Among all the mythical creatures in Burma (now called Myanmar), there is one mythical beast called Chinthe. This resembles a Lion. Since the Chindits were to operate as a Guerilla Force behind the Japanese Lines, they needed to have a name that was both unusual and unconventional. This name was given to the 77 Para Brigade, which eventually operated for over a year and had two operations in Burma, one in 1943 and the other 1944.

The reason for creating an unconventional force was because the Japanese could cut through the jungle easily. The terrain of the battlefield was full of jungles and mountains without any proper roads. This made it difficult for a mechanized conventional army to operate against an unconventional foe.

This is explained by Charles J.Rolo in his book “Wingate’s Raiders: “The Japanese drove our mechanized army out of Burma in 1942 by using jungle paths to cut its road communications. It was desperately necessary to find a means of beating the Japanese at their own game...Wingate was asked to show how jungle trails fighters could be beaten from the jungle itself. Wingate’s plan was to go back for his transport to Alexander’s animals for transport (elephants, bullocks, mules) and forward for his supply and communications to the air and ether...in effect he engaged to train his men to stealth, evasion, feint and secrecy; to prowl, bluff, steal, bewilder, sting and stab; to endure heat, hunger, thirst and tension of a bloody blind-man’s-buff; to suffer certainly and if necessary to die.

“These men marched across Burma from Imphal, crossed the Chindwin and the Irrawaddy, cut the Mandalay – Myitkyina railway and accomplished their purpose of drawing off Japanese concentrations from several fronts and disrupting their main lines of supply. They were a band of gallant fighters who have shown the Jap that he is no longer the master of the jungle.

“In May 1942, Major Orde Charles Wingate, a 39 – year old officer, was suddenly promoted Brigadier. He was already something of a legend in the British army. As a man, he was an eccentric with the zeal of an evangelist and intellectual fervour of an Old Testament prophet. As a soldier, he was a specialist in the unorthodox, with an unshakeable preference for the unconventional and a touch of a bandit in his zest for violent action. At his best against heavy odds, he had acquired the Guerilla’s extreme faith in courage, bluff, surprise. Burning desert and rugged and chaotic mountains were his favourite terrain. Night was the time of his greatest achievements. His conception of strategy and tactics applied on the battlefield produced brilliant results. He won the DSO in 1938 for clearing Palestine of terrorists and for his guerilla exploits, in Ethiopia.

Before he moved on to the Chindits, Captain Moti Lal Katju had been attached to the fourth and fifth Indian Divisions in the Middle East along with Captain K.U.Nayar and Lt

.Col .Desmond Young (former Editor of The Pioneer, Allahabad & Lucknow) as Indian Army Observers. After his successful completion of the assignment, he was assigned to the Chindits where he lost his life at the fag end of the operation.

It was one of the Imperial dogmas that the British treated the British units and the Indian units separately though they fought battles together. Another aspect of this was the exclusive existence of the Gurkha regiments. Gurkhas are Hindus, but they had a separate place in the British scheme of working in India.

It went to such an extent that when Indians began getting the King's commission, they were excluded from commanding Gurkha troops. Only British officers could command them. However, when World War II commenced and the Japanese onslaught started, they (the British) had to change to meet the exigencies of wartime conditions.

The entire Chindit Force comprised British and Gurkha troops all volunteers. When the first Wingate expedition was ready to set out for Burma, they took two Indian officers with them. One was Captain Moti Lal Katju, who in peacetime had been a journalist and had volunteered for war service. He had been sent to the Middle East and though he was officially an 'Indian Army Observer', he went into action in Libya where he won the Military Cross (MC) for gallantry. He was selected to go with the Chindits as an Official Observer.

The other was Captain B M Rao (later Lt. General) of the Indian Medical Service (later the Indian Army Medical Corps).

As an Observer, he maintained a diary and showed an entry in it to Major John Jefferies, a member of the Chindit Force.:

"Behind me there is a never-ending vista of hills, small and tall ones, heavy with their weight of virgin forests which have scarcely seen a hundred human beings in their centuries of existence. Further back are still mountains which have left us a sore remembrance of blistered feet and aching backs. Four miles away, I can see the Chindwin glistening in the sunlight like a silver streak in a green bowl. Beyond the forest-covered slopes of a hill is the 'green jungle hell' through which we must find a way, destroying the enemy.

"Considering the amount of marching under very difficult conditions already accomplished, the spirit of ordinary troops would not have been very high; they would have been completely 'browned off'. But in this Force, there is no sign of apathy or tiredness. The men are looking cheerfully to the beginning of the campaign when we cross the Chindwin.

"The Burmese troops hope soon to be back in familiar surroundings and amongst their own people; they are only too anxious to go on. The Gurkhas, sturdy hill fighters who seem incapable of fatigue, are looking forward to the day when they will meet the Japs. Their compatriots earned a name for themselves during the retreat from Burma, and these troops, though they have never seen action, hope to do better. "The British troops are probably the most cheerful of all. They look upon the whole show as a great adventure. Probably the greatest incentive to good morale is the absolute faith which every man has in the Commander (Brigadier Orde Wingate).

“Practically none of us knows where we are going, for how long, or what our specific job is. Various people have talked of a journey of two months to fifteen months. Others speak of the Force as a Suicide Column. But one and all say : ‘The Brigadier will pull us through.’ “

When the Chindit Force was returning after months of operations behind the enemy lines, and were ready to cross the Chindwin River, they needed intelligence about the enemy presence if any in the neighbourhood. A few days prior to this, when they were still in the jungle, Captain Katju, who volunteered to venture into a native village to look for boats, had a premonition that he would not get out alive, and he wanted Major Jefferies to carry his diary, which contained a day-by-day account of the campaign.

To cheer him up, Jefferies had said ‘Nonsense. We all get to feeling that way.’ And had refused to take the diary. Captain Katju never returned from his last patrol, narrated Major years later.

Captain Katju’s death was mourned by many including Wing Commander W .W .Russell who expressed his feeling as under in his interesting book entitled “Forgotten Skies”:

“One of the biggest losses of the campaign had been the death of the young Indian Army observer, Captain Moti Lal Katju, who was sent by Ivor Jehu as Wingate’s P.R.O He had won the M.C in the Western desert and was one of the most popular P.R. officers in the Middle East and in India. Without any hardening or training, he went in with Wingate’s brigade column and stayed with him until they were almost out of Burma. He was ambushed and shot in a village just beyond the Chindwin one day before the Brigadier and John Jefferies swam across to India and safety. His diary went with him, and one of the finest records of the campaign was lost as well as one of India’s best young men”.

-Wingate’s Raiders by Charles J. Rollo, December 1944

**Brigadier K.L.Atal, MVC, MC
Commander, 77 Para Brigade
Hero Of Zoji La
(November 1948)**

During 1947 – 48, the Kashmir war with Pakistan was on. Her Army had been threatening to occupy Kargil and Leh in Ladakh. After his war service, Col. K.L.Atal was promoted and sent to J&K in command of 77 Para Brigade which eventually conquered the mighty Zoji La which lies in the majestic Himalayas at height 11,000 feet.

Following is an account of the operation named “Operation Bison” which after facing tremendous odds eventually managed to put tanks for the first time in the history of the

world at such a great height. This account was written by Major S.K.Sinha, later on Lt.General S.K.Sinha, Vice Chief of Army Staff in his book “Operation Rescue”

“Beyond the 11,578 feet high Zoji La (La means a pass) lays the semi arctic and barren, Ladakh district. The average height of this area is over 10,000 feet. Apart from its geographical and climatic isolation, this region appeared unaffected by the sands of time. It was as if time had stood still in these parts for many centuries. Ladakh is a land of the Lama. Politically, it is a part of Jammu and Kashmir State and its administration is controlled from Srinagar.

“Surrounded by 20,000 feet high mountains, Leh which is itself at a height of 11,500 feet, is the capital of Ladakh. It is the largest town of the district and for that matter one of the largest towns in the world at that height. Tucked away in its Himalayan isolation, beyond high mountain ranges, Leh had not been very accessible to the outside world. It is approximately 230 miles long mule track across high mountain passes*. The events of 1948 broke the geographical isolation of Leh. With its newly built landing ground, it now appeared on the air map of India and this fact has since been the principal promoter of Leh’s closer association with the outside world. However, in May 1948, when the first Dakota landed at Leh, the locals turned up at the airfield with grass for “the celestial horse”!

*A motorable road has now been built broadly following this alignment. Thus Leh is now connected by roads both from the West and the South.

“In late August 1948, when ‘Arjun’ column with reinforcements for Leh had commenced its long trek from Manali, we had also made out plans for an assault on Zoji La. These reinforcements were expected in Leh by the middle of September and the period up to that time was critical for the defence of that remote outpost. It was, therefore, necessary that we commenced our operations against Zoji La early so as to keep the enemy engaged in this sector breaking through Zoji La was given to Brigadier K.L.Atal, commanding 77 Para Brigade.

“Atal concentrated his Brigade at Baltal at the foot of Zoji La by the end of August. His brigade comprised a battalion from 5 Maratha Regiment, 3 Jat Regiment and 1/5 Royal Gorkha Rifles supported by a battery of 3.7 howitzers. First Patiala Infantry holding piquets around Baltal, covered the concentration of this force.

“Atal’s plans for this assault, which I am afraid had been named rather ominously Operation Duck, catered for a wide left hook by the Gorkhas via Botkulganj to Dras and a frontal assault against Chabutra and Mukand ridges by the Jats and Marathas respectively. A company of 5/11 Gorkhas Rifles at Khanabal was at the same time to carry out diversionary operations towards Kargil via Suru.

“Operation Duck commenced at 11.30 a.m. on 3rd September, 1948 with the Gorkhas proceeding on the left hook towards Botkulganj and another company of Gorkhas at Khanabal advancing towards Suru. The operation progressed satisfactorily till the 6th. The Gorkhas on the left had secured Botkulganj pass and were now advancing to Point 8,093.

The main column advanced towards Zoji La. The attack failed due to heavy concentrated fire from the enemy.”

By 18th October, 77 Para Brigade under Atal was again concentrated at Baltal and poised for another assault over the now familiar ground to Zoji La. The brigade had been given additional fire support for this operation. Besides a squadron of light tanks and armoured cars, we also had two batteries of 25-pounders and one battery of 3.7 howitzers to support the attack. The three battalions of this brigade now were, 4 Rajput Regiment, commanded by Lt. Colonel Girdhari Singh, M.C, 1/5 Royal Gorkha Rifles by Lt. Col. A.S. Pathania, MC* and I Patiala Infantry by Lt, Col. Sukhdev Singh, M.C. These three commanding officers had ably fought on different fronts in the last war—Africa, Italy, Burma and Java – but the operation in which they were now about to participate was to be unique from the point of view of hazards imposed by the elements.

At their head, was their calm, patient and unperturbed brigade commander, Brigadier Atal, who had for some time been successfully defying both the enemy and the elements in this theatre.

While troops were being concentrated at Baltal for this operation, the engineers were feverishly working on a jeep track in full view of the 11,578 feet high pass, and the enemy’s positions and work in the later stages could only be carried out under cover of darkness. This track was of great importance to us as our plans for this operation visualized the tanks crossing the pass to take on enemy positions on the far end, the pass being about 2 miles long. The tank drivers familiarized themselves with this track by driving soft vehicles over it and by foot reconnaissance.

“The tanks had completely surprised the enemy and he was reported to be fleeing in panic. They had got across to Gumri basin by 2.p.m that afternoon and were now shooting up the enemy from the rear. Maj Gen K.S.Thimayya, the Divisional Commander, himself came and his at the head of this column must have been a source of great inspiration to the troops, I am afraid it was a risk which we could ill afford to take. Divisional commanders are not supposed to expose themselves in battle like a leading scout. But Thimayya was a very unusual divisional commander. Anyway all’s well that ends well,” says Maj. Sinha.

“By the 2nd November, Atal had captured and cleared the whole of the two-mile long pass and the dominating heights on either side of the defile. It had meant some hard fighting and our troops had to brave the winter cold at those forbidding heights with no special winter clothing. It had been a great test of their endurance and they had come out of it with flying colours. **Never before in military history, had tanks been used at such height, nor had a modern battle been fought under such hazardous conditions.** The troops taking part in this operation had every reason to be proud of their achievement but they had no time to rest on their laurels.

The advance beyond Zoji La had to continue as Kargil, 40 miles east of the pass, was our objective and the link-up with Leh was our final goal. Lt. General Cariappa sent them a

signal on this successful breakthrough, which read, “Convey my personal message to all ranks employed in Operation Bison, my admiration of their splendid work under trying winter conditions. Tell them that there is nothing impossible for them, our gallant soldiers. Dras must repeat must be captured with little delay...advance forward to Kargil with all speed. Give no rest to the enemy until you have joined up with Leh.”

Brigadier Atal belonged to a family of Pandits who had military service in their blood. His father was a doctor but he donned the uniform and served with the Indian Expeditionary Force in France where he was killed in action in November 1914.

K.L .Atal was his younger son. His elder son was Hiralal Atal who retired as a Lt. General.

K.L.Atal was born on December 7th 1913 at Ferozepur. After passing is F.A. Examination from the Punjab University he joined the Prince of Wales Royal Military College in 1932. He graduated in 1934 and was commissioned as a second Lieutenant in the Indian Army. Later, he served in the Hampshire Regiment in 1935, after that he was posted to 13th Frontier Force Rifles. His regiment served in Waziristan Operation in 1937. He was promoted Captain and his unit was sent to Middle East for operations in 1940. He took part in operations in Italy and Karen.

For gallantry in action, he was awarded the Military Cross. In 1941, he was sent to England for three months training. Later, he also fought against the Italians and Germans at Tobruk. In 1942, his regiment retired to India and he was selected for training at the Army Staff College, Quetta. In 1945, his unit was sent to the Eastern Theatre of war to Burma, Siam, and Malaya, Singapore. In October 1945, he along with his regiment, returned to India. By this time, he was a Major.

He was posted for a short while to the Adjutant General’s Branch after which he was sent to Dehra Doon. By this time (1946) he was promoted Lt.Col. He was posted to Delhi as D.A.A.G. at Army Headquarters, New Delhi. After this, he was given the command of the first Battalion of 9th Gurkha Rifles and he was posted to Jammu. Until then, no Indian officers were allowed to command Gurkha troops.

On October 22, 1947 Pakistan invaded Kashmir, and Col .Atal was wounded in action in 1948 and was admitted to the command hospital at Delhi. in May. He was promoted Colonel. He was recalled by Major General K.S .Thimayya to Srinagar and immediately given command of 77 Para Brigade. In the process of taking over command of an active Brigade he donned the stars of a Brigadier on promotion.The rest is history.

After the Kashmir war was over, he was posted as Sub Area Commander at Lucknow, In November, 1949, he went to meet his elder brother who was at that time a Lt. General posted at New Delhi. They both went hunting for shikar in jungles near Gurgaon in Rohtak district. On November 25th 1949, he suddenly suffered a heart attack. Before medical aid could reach him, he died at the young age of 36. For a strapping 6 foot, 6 inches tall soldier, he just faded away like the soldier in the ballad.

**Air Chief Marshal Swaroop Krishna Kaul MVC,
Chief of Air Staff (C.A.S)
31.07.93 to 31.12.95
Indian Air Force
(4721) F(P)**

Air Chief Marshal ‘Suppi’ Kaul was commissioned in the IAF as a Fighter Pilot in July 1954 after training at the National Defence Academy and the Flying Academies. An outstanding and highly decorated fighter pilot, he has flown over 3700 hours on almost all types of fighter aircraft held on the inventory of the IAF, including the latest MIG –29 and Mirage –2000.

Air Chief Marshal Kaul has had a distinguished military career and took part in combat operations in both the Indo-Pak conflicts of 1965 and 1971. During the latter, he undertook photo reconnaissance and strike missions in the Eastern Sector, and for his conspicuous gallantry, professional skill and leadership of a very high order throughout the period of operations, he was awarded the Maha Vir Chakra (MVC), the country’s second highest gallantry award.

In the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971, Wing Commander Kaul commanding a fighter Bomber Squadron carried out missions over heavily defended sectors of Comilla, Sylhet, Saidput, Tejgaon, Kurmitola airfields and strike missions over Dacca which led to the surrender by the Pakistan troops in Bangladesh.

A graduate of the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington, Air Chief Marshal Kaul has held a number of important command and staff appointments, including command of an operational squadron and a fighter base as also Chief Operations Officer of a fighter wing. From 1982 to 1986, he was the Air Attaché at the Indian Embassy in Moscow during which period unprecedented procurements and inductions of a wide variety of aircraft and weapon systems from the erstwhile Soviet Union took place. He was also instrumental in co-ordinating the first ever-successful Indo-Soviet Joint Space Flight.

The staff appointments held by him include Joint Director, Intelligence and Director Personnel (Officers) at Air HQ and senior Air Staff Officer, South –Western Air Command and Central Air Command. Later, he was Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Central Air Command and Western Air Command prior to taking over as Chief of the Air Staff. For his services of most exceptional order, he was appointed Honorary ADC to the President of India in August 1991 and awarded Param Vishist Seva Medal in January 1992. He is the commodore Commandant of 17 Squadron “Golden Arrows”.

Captain Mahendra Nath Mulla, MVC, I.N

He sank with his ship to save 66 of his men in less than three minutes; an inspiring story of Captain Mulla's supreme sacrifice and devotion during the Indo-Pak War, 1971.

While the Western fleet was creating a glorious chapter in India's naval history, he was hunting Pakistani submarines in the Arabian Sea to enable the fleet to carry out its task. In the process when his ship, INS KHUKRI was attacked and damaged, he went down with her to live up to the highest traditions of the Navy and became a legend, saving 66 of his men in less than three minutes.

Sixty-six men clung to buoys in the dark sea. There was no sign of humanity. There was water, water everywhere. The chill winds blew over the western coast. The winter darkness made the sea look gloomier. It was just 8.03 p.m. on December 9, 1971. But it seemed darker than usual and all the men had a queer feeling. They were tense but happy. Surely, they were searching for something. Was it life or was it death? They didn't know; all they knew was that something had gone forever. It was not the loneliness of the sea but the loneliness within their hearts. And there seemed no end to their struggle for survival.

Minutes stretched to hours and the night got darker but seemed unending. After what appeared to them an interminable voyage into darkness, they saw the hues of early morning. It turned brighter, moment-by-moment. Soon the sun emerged in its full circle. But its brightness cast no glow on the sixty-six faces. They were still sad, they still seemed to search for something. It was at 8 a.m. the next morning after a trial of 12 hours when they saw a ship approaching and, one by one, all of them were pulled up into the ship. But they were not only in search of their ship., they were also in search of the man who had had gopne down to live up to the highest traditions of the navy, their heroic Captain who had literally pushed out his men to save them and perished himself.

What happened

This is what had happened on the western coast. With two major attacks, the Navy had sunk two Pakistani warships and then closed in on Karachi and bombarded vital installations. They bombarded from as close as 24 miles from the Karachi harbour. Pakistani fuel tankers had been hit and it seemed that entire Karachi was on fire. A pilot later reported that this was the biggest blaze he had ever seen in action.

In retaliation, Pakistan sent its powerful French-built subs on the prowl. The American-gifted "Ghazi", caught at the mouth of the Vishakapatnam harbor, had been sunk. But the Pakistanis had three more Daphne class subs. It also had a fleet of Italian-made midgets, which could be quite a menace to the Indian ships.

The Indian Navy was on the lookout for enemy vessels, especially those posing an underwater threat. On December 9, an Indian maritime reconnaissance aircraft spotted enemy activity in the northern parts of the Arabian Sea and informed the authorities about it. A

task force of the Western Fleet was at once put out to hunt down Pakistani subs and destroy them.

Heading the force was Captain Mahendra Nath Mulla in his 1200-ton anti-submarine frigate, “Khukri.” The “Khukri” was almost a vintage vessel built in Great Britain in 1958. It had also not been fitted with torpedo tubes. But the pride of the Indian navy, has never been its equipment but its personnel; the men behind the machines. Even though Captain Mulla was not in a powerful frigate, he moved undeterred. Life at sea was ever a great adventure for Capt. Mulla. In fact, he joined Indian Navy because of his love for life at sea.

Naval Career

Born in a lawyer’s family, he joined the Indian Navy after passing the Intermediate examination in 1946. After four years of training in the United Kingdom, he returned to serve as an executive officer on ‘I.N.S. Madras,’ a minesweeper. Then followed a three-year stint on the frigate, ‘Krishna’. He was transferred to shore duty for one year and until the end of 1963 he served as staff officer in charge of naval appointments at the naval headquarters. Soon after, he became the commanding officer of the destroyer ‘Rana.’ Between 1965 and 1970, he again held staff jobs, first as Deputy Naval Adviser, to the Indian High Commissioner in London for three years and then as Executive Officer at the shore establishment “INS Angre” at Bombay.

He spent a few months again at the Naval Headquarters in the Directorate of Naval Plans before he joined the “Khukri”. Among other things, he was known as an astute defence counsel in court-martial trails. Though he enjoyed all kinds of work, life at sea was his first love. He was very happy when he became the commanding officer of “Khukri” in February 1971.

Colourful Personality

He was an extremely popular person. A colourful personality, he was always participating in amateur plays. At times, he led his men in singing on the ship. He had a great love for Urdu poetry. His knack for Shairi made him highly popular.

One of his officers narrated that once when they were waiting, suddenly Capt. Mulla got into a poetic mood and began to recite Urdu couplets. Some Arabs who were also aboard sat out the entire night with him. The Arabs were fascinated by his personality. Even at service gatherings, he was the life of the party.

Being a religious person, he carried the pictures and idols of his gods aboard the ship too. He was very regular in his prayers and on December 9 he had said the day’s prayers. He had lit his cigarette and was strolling alertly on deck. “Kiran” and another ship were away on some mission. Suddenly, ‘Khukri’ established contact with the enemy and was sunk.

Touching Story

The story of Captain Mulla's valour was recounted by the sixty-six survivors. "The Khukri" was hit by a salvo of three torpedoes in quick succession. With the first two hits, electricity was cut and there was no communication. The officers and sailors on the ship's deck and in the passage ran helter-skelter. The rest had no time, even to know what had happened. A third torpedo hit the rear of the ship where the ammunition lay. There was a colossal explosion.

When Capt. Mulla realized the nature of the damage, he lost no time in deciding to abandon ship. He ordered his second-in-command to cast life boats, buoys and rafts into the sea. In carrying out this vital task, 33-year-old Joginder Singh also went down. Capt. Mulla ordered his men to get away. Many of the younger, inexperienced sailors preferred the false security of the sturdy steel deck below their feet to the unknown dangers of the sea. They stood looking at him when he asked them to abandon ship. They were reluctant but there was no time to lose. He pushed them into the stormy but relatively safer waters. Capt. Mulla wanted to save as many of his men as he could in the little time he had. He took off his life jacket and gave it to one of the sailors and pushed him away. The sailor looked back, beckoning the Captain to save himself first. But he retorted, 'go on, save yourself. Don't worry about me.'

Those were to be his last words. He knew he had no more time. He sat on his chair with a lighted cigarette in his hand. The last sailor took the lifeboat and joined the survivors. He swam away to avoid being sucked in by the sinking ship. The survivors looked back; the ship was sinking rapidly and the sea was closing in over the bridge, the highest part of the frigate. And sitting on the captain's chair was Capt. Mulla. All the sixty-six men could see only the forehead of the 6 foot 2 inch tall captain who had stayed to save as many men as he could – sixty-six in less than three minutes.

If he had wanted, he could have saved himself. The British Admiralty had ordered during World War II: "While the highest traditions of a captain going down with his ship are fully appreciated, the Royal Navy cannot afford to lose experienced commanding officers. They are, therefore, to endeavor to save themselves, so that they may live to fight another day.' But Capt. Mulla preferred to die as he had decided to be the last one to take a lifeboat. of the 24 officers and 235 sailors on board the INS KHUKRI, six officers and 60 sailors are a living tribute to Capt. Mulla's valour.

The story of Capt. Mulla is one of selfless devotion and sacrifice. The 45-year-old captain was the most sought after man when he was alive, and by his death, he will be remembered through the ages.

-Mina Kaur

The Soldier's Soldier
General Tapeswar Narain Raina,
MVC,PB

October 20, 1962. Chushul. Ladakh: Over the wireless, the operator heard the incredible words; "We shall take tea in Chushul on October 24". The voice was unmistakably Chinese and the Hindi heavily accented.

He rushed with the signal to the Chief Signal Officer of 114 Infantry Brigade, who in turn gave it to the Brigade major. Finally, it reached the Brigade commander, Brigadier T.N. Raina.

While the commander did not say anything, the Chinese intention was clear as they started shelling the Brigade headquarters and the airstrip that if overrun by the Chinese would be the beginning of the loss of the whole of Ladakh.

Those were critical days for the Indian Army. While the rest of the world knew and was told about the worst reverse suffered by the Army, the Western and Northern sector hardly figured in the news. And in charge of the defence of this vital piece of real estate was a dapper short square jawed and not particularly military bearing individual who would one-day become the Chief of Army Staff.

The Chinese attacked the approaches to Chushul over the Rizang La and Gurung. A rifle company of the 13th Kumaon Regiment, Gen. Raina's and Gen. Thimmayya's regiment, held Rizang La, a bleak snow covered feature at a height of 17,000 feet. The Chinese attacked with a large force, supported by heavy artillery and mortar fire, rockets and automatic rifles. The Indians had a section of World War II vintage 3 inch mortars, yet they doggedly fought wave after wave of Chinese attacks.

The Indian casualties were 105 killed, five taken prisoner and three wounded. The Company CO Major Shaitan Singh died with his troops. It was literally the battle of the last man and the last round. At Gurung, the other feature covering the approach to Chushul, the battle raged for two days, often confusingly in cold and heavy mist. Gurung fell to the Chinese. Their casualties were 700, the only sector where the Indian Army was able to hit back.

Soon after the cease-fire was declared, it snowed and the men who died while fighting were pulled out three months later frozen as they died with weapons in hand pointing them at the enemy. The CO was awarded a posthumous PVC, the highest gallantry award the nation could bestow on him and the Brigade Commander who directed the battle got a well-deserved Maha Vir Chakra, the second highest.

Gen. Raina has had a colourful career as a soldier. He lacked the dash and the swagger of Manekshaw, but like Bradley in the US Army in World War II (he was called a GI General) Gen. Raina was the soldier's soldier). Quiet, calm, unassuming, he was one with

the Jawan. “I know where the shoe pinches’, he told this writer in 1976 when he was in Bangalore.

“Tappy” Raina was meant for a scholastic career, but then World War II was on. He wanted to don the uniform and even tried his hand at joining the Air Force. He was commissioned in 1942 and found himself in the Middle East where in a grenade-throwing incident, he was badly hurt and suffered injuries in both legs and lost an eye.

The 1st Battalion (of the 19 Hyderabad Regiment as the Kumaon Regiment was called in those day) returned to India and by 1944 was again in Burma as part of the 26th Indian Infantry Brigade. Here, he distinguished himself while leading a patrol and spotted the Japanese whereupon the battalion engaged it in combat. He was mentioned in dispatches.

After the war, for a man who had lost an eye, he joined the paratroopers, and went up steadily in the hierarchy passing examinations and doing courses etc. After 1962, he went up the ladder and by 1971 found himself a three-star general commanding a newly created corps called the II Corps in the Bangla Desh war.

His corps led the assault on impregnable fortresses like Jessore, Khulna and other towns west of the Padma. Then a stint as Western Army Commander, and finally on June 1, 1975, he became the Chief of Army Staff.

Speaking to newsmen once, Gen. Raina said; ‘the Army is apolitical’ and that summed up this professional soldiers’ attitude to politics. And this was tested during the difficult days of the emergency. When the news about the elections in 1977 started coming in, all kinds of rumours were afloat in Delhi and some quarters started stories about Gen. Raina’s alleged intention of involving the army in politics. To his everlasting credit, he stood fast and to this day, India owes a debt of gratitude to him.

He was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1971.

“Tappy” Raina was born in Jammu on Jan.24, 1921 and was educated at Arya High School, Ludhiana from where he passed his matriculation and later graduated from the famous Foreman Christian College, Lahore.

Married to Marie Antoinette, he had two children, a son and a daughter. The son, Jyoti, also commissioned into his father’s regiment, the Kumaonis was killed in an unfortunate motorcycle accident. The daughter is happily married. Gen. Raina like the ballad of the old soldier has faded away, but he has left a legacy that many a young aspiring soldier can admire and look forward to ambulation. After serving the army for 37 years he became a diplomat, Indian High Commissioner, to Canada.

Lieutenant General (retd) T. K. Sapru

Lt. General T K Sapru, retired as the General Officer Commanding in Chief (GOC-in-C), of the Western Command of the Indian Army in 2009.

In a career spanning 38 years, General Sapru has held many important and prestigious command and staff appointments in the Army. In recognition of his services, the President of India conferred the Param Vishisht Seva Medal (PVSM) on him for distinguished service of the most exceptional service on Republic Day , 2009.

Gen. Sapru had his early school education at Nabha in the Punjab Public School. He was commissioned into the Infantry in the Fourth Gorkha Rifles on June 15, 1969. In the 1971 war, the General saw action on both the Western and Eastern Fronts.

He was during his army career Assistant Military Attache in the Indian Embassy at Khatmandu, Nepal. His other assignments included General Staff Officer (GSO) in the Directorate of Military Operations (DMO), Colonel, General Staff (GSOI) in an active division in J & K, Deputy Military Secretary in the Military Secretary Branch and Additional Director General (Procurement) in the Master General of Ordnance (MGO) branch.

He is an alumnus of the Defence Services Staff College (DSSC) Wellington and National Defence College (NDC) New Delhi. He has earlier been awarded the Chief of Army Staff Commendation in 1985 and the Yudh Seva Medal for distinguished service active operations in 1999.

The General has a varied command experience at various levels. He commanded an infantry battalion in intense counter insurgency operations, an infantry brigade in Punjab and another brigade in J & K during Operation Vijay (1999). He commanded an active division deployed on the Line of Control in J & K and was General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the Nagrota based Army Corps before taking over as the GOC-in-C of Western Command, Chandi Mandir in November 2007.

Captain (Dr.) Hari Narayan Shivapuri

Late Capt. (Dr.) Hari Narain Shivapuri was born on 24th September 1898; He passed High School and Intermediate examinations in the year 1915 and 1917 in the first Division. Then he joined M.B.B.S course at K.G.Medical College, Lucknow and passed with Certificate of Honours in Anatomy in 1922. Then he joined the Indian Military Services in 1923-1932 (9 Years). He was M.O.I/c Brigade Laboratory Burma & Waziristan.

His younger brother late Col.R.N.Shivpuri was in the army on the Assam front during the Second World War.

Their Contribution

Not everyone who dons the uniform can become a general or get the opportunity of a lifetime to do a heroic deed. In addition to the heroes mentioned earlier, quite a few have joined the three services with the army taking the largest number.

The community has produced apart from two service chiefs, one Vice Chief of Army Staff Lt.General Moti Dar, seven army commanders in the rank of Lt.Generals, three Major generals, five Brigadiers and over a dozen Colonels. In the Air Force four Air Vice Marshals, and in the Navy two captains. (A Naval Captain is equivalent to a Brigadier in the army).

A creditable performance for a small community.

Major Susheel Aima, K.C

The Kirti Chakra awarded to Major Sushil Aima posthumously on the 51st "Republic Day" January 26,2000, has done it proud not only to his immediate family but the wider family of Kashmiri Pandits all across the world.

With his singular act of heroism in leading his brave company of commandos from the front, to clear the Kipra forests of the terrorists in the Poonch sector set on destruction all round, he blazoned the horizon with his extraordinary bravery.

Sushil Aima was all of 22 years when he passed out of the Indian Military Academy (IMA). Dehra Dun, and was commissioned in Air Defence Artillery. He was eventually posted to 17 Rashtriya Rifles on deputation and assigned the anti-terrorist task in the highly vulnerable Poonch Sector. A youth of deep sense of duty and patriotism, he spared nothing to accomplish his tasks in the treacherous terrain. To him the challenge was an opportunity to show his mettle. And all was going well for him. He has now earned a well-deserved vacation. Just when he was all packed up ready to leave for home, he was informed of some ferocious terrorists assembling in the hills planning slaughter and destruction of the villages in the vicinity. This was the fatal midnight call of July 31-August 1, 1999.

The Major was made of sterner stuff. The gallant soldier in him forgot all about his vacation. Keeping the call of duty above everything else, he stepped forward to lead his company in assault, no matter how high the risk involved in the mission.

Leading his small team of commandos, he marched out to track down the terrorists in the dead of night in the Kopra forests near Mandi. They zeroed in on the enemy. They plugged his escape routes, and in the morning, they challenged the holed up enemy. A fierce encounter followed for hours. The terrorists rained grenades. The Major covered his jawans and shot down the thrower. He proceeded to chase and seek out the others till he was face to face with three more of the enemy. Charged with grit and zeal he grappled

with two and brought them down in hand-to-hand fight. He turned to the third just when three more appeared and shot him from behind.

Major Aima was undeterred. He managed to take out his pistol and finished up the third. The marauders turned tail and vanished in the jungle. The battle was won. The enemy was defeated. The valiant Major had done this duty with success and honour. It was now time for him to go for rest in eternal peace.

Captain Sameer Bhan of 11 Jat Regiment, assigned to Assam Rifles, attained martyrdom in a road-mine blast on February 2002 “after successfully accomplishing his task” somewhere at a terrain in Imphal fighting insurgents. Accompanied by his young wife and an army major his body was flown to Delhi the next day and after a night’s halt in Gulmohar Park, new Delhi, at his uncle, Shri D.P.Bhan’s residence, it was given a befitting funeral due to a war hero. Followed by large number of Biradari members, residents of the journalist colony and service officers in army vehicles, the decorated military hearse, piloted by a Signals jeep, was taken to Brar Square, Delhi Cantt., where the mortal remains of the gallant officer were consigned to flames with the customary parade, volley of gunfire, salute and placing of wreaths.

Gallantry Awards For KP Defence Officers

President K.R.Narayanan has commended and decorated many senior defence officers of our community for gallantry and distinguished services in the Indian armed forces on the 54th Republic Day this year(2002).

Major General Bharat Kaul has been awarded Ati Vishisht Seva Medal [AVSM] for his distinguished services of highest order. Major General Kaul joined NDA in 1961 and was commissioned in 1964. He later joined the Infantry [Parachute Regiment] and participated in the 1965 and 1971 Wars. He has held prestigious staff and regimental posts during his 37 years of service. A graduate of Staff College, he commanded a division in the nineties and also was on the staff at Calcutta.

Brig. Tej Kaul has been awarded the Vishisht Seva Medal for his distinguished services of high order as Commander of Mumbai Sub Area, Mumbai. Brigadier Kaul was commissioned in 12 Kumaon Regiment in 1968 and actively participated with his battalion in Bangladesh War in 1971. A Staff College graduate, he has held prestigious staff and Command appointments in Tangdhar, Akhnoor, Jammu and Doda. He was specially selected for Higher Command and later for National Defence College course last year. He has sterling qualities of head and heart and is a soldier to the boot. He is destined to do well in the years to come.

Brigadier Bushan Sapru has been awarded Vishisht Seva Medal for his distinguished services of high order for his long and distinguished services as Doctor in the Army Dental Corps. During his commendable service, he has brought many changes in the dental surgery in the Army, which has been widely acclaimed in the defence and civil circuits. He was specially selected for the teaching faculty of Armed Forces Medical College [AFMC] and his contribution to his profession has been widely acclaimed as such.

These distinguished soldiers join many of our decorated and distinguished community members in the defence services like Colonel Harsh Kaul (5th Gorkha Rifles FF) (both Shaurya Chakras), late Lt.Gen.B.M.Kaul and his younger brother Brigadier K.K.Kaul; Lt.Gen Ashok Handoo (Guards); Lt.Gen Hreday Kaul, (Armoured Corps); Lt.Gen Vijay Madan PVSM, 4th Gorkhas, VSM ,College of Combat (illustrious son of Principal B.K.Madan, Lt.Gen Moti K.Dhar PVSM (Basantar) Armoured Corps, Maj.Gen.Arminder Kaul (Son of Principal J.N.Kaul), Air Vice Marshals Challu, VSM, Air Vice Marshal Bhushan Bhan, Air Vice Marshal Kapil Kak {Air Force}, Brigadier R.N.Madan-Armoured Corps; Late Brigadier I.M.Dhar, Dogra , Brigadier Rattan Kaul(5thGorkha Rifles, Bangladesh 71), (Khem Karan 93.94);Lt. General Tej K.Sapru AVSM(1971 War and Uri Brigade) who retired as GOC-inC, Western Command and many more from BSF, IPS, CRPF,GREF and other Para Military Forces.

Colonel Tiku Awarded

Col Kuldeep Kumar Tiku, CWE (Army), Secunderabad, Andhra Pradesh, has been awarded the “Sena Medal” for devotion to duty while serving the earthquake victims of Gujarat.

From Koshur Samachar , March 2002.

Munshi Makhan Lal

First Kashmiri Pandit to train and become a paratrooper and distinguish himself in action.

Born on Feb 25, 1936 Srinagar, educated: Matric, Amar Singh College m Krishna July 18, 1963. Journalist, Captain School Sports Eleven, took part in dramas, debates etc; awarded All-Round Best Boy Certificate 1951, joined Army Nov 1953, distinguished himself as Paratrooper, did 11 parachute jumps (first Kashmiri Pandit to do so); served in NEFA 1957, 58 saved lives of two jawans, did mountaineering course 1959, left Army and returned home , May 1960; joined State Health Deptt as Clerk Nov 1960, became Accountant, transferred to Field Survey Organization as Supervisor, May 1965; promoted Editor Feb 1967; edited and produced counter-propaganda material including 13

pamphlets under guidance of veteran J. N. Zutshi, such as Kashmir is India, Kashmir In India, Pakistan Scene, Kashmir Fights Back Aggression, Azad Kashmir Ki Badhali (Urdu) 1966, worked Sub-Editor News Agency 1967, edited an English daily 1967-70; awarded letter of appreciation by J & K Govt for his dedicated work.

Major General S. K. Razdan, KC, VSM

As a Lt. Col S K Razdan was deployed in 1994 with his battalion in the Kashmir Valley and during anti-insurgency operations, went to rescue 14 women who had been held captive by militants. Though he managed to evacuate them, he was pounded by bullets at point blank range that injured his spine. He became a paraplegic, but continued service in the Army.

On May 7, 2011, General Razdan became the first physically handicapped senior officer to coordinate an attestation parade of 112 recruits of the Parachute Regiment at Bangalore on completion of their 34 weeks training.

Maj. General Razdan is a recipient of Kirti Chakra, the second highest award for gallantry in peacetime and has also been honoured with the Vishisht Sevaa Medal for meritorious service.

A Gallant Soldier

“Kashmiri Pandits have historically been known to take up quintessential white collar jobs. Gallantry and military ethos in this community is widely unknown. Time is ripe that this notion is dispelled. This small community has produced a number of gallant and successful military leaders. I in this piece shall make an attempt to throw light upon one of the brave Kashmiri soldiers, Brigadier Sunil Kumar Razdan, Kirti Chakra (This was written in 2007---since then, Brig. Razdan has been promoted to the rank of Major General ---May 2011).

An unknown soldier, I came to hear of his gallantry during a casual conversation with an acquaintance. Impressed and proud of such a military leader from our community, I informed the president of our Samaj about this great soldier. His chest swelled with pride and he readily agreed to my suggestion to meet this gallant soldier to know about his act of bravery in person. I sought an appointment with this brave officer of the Indian Army and met him on October 13, 2007.

A second generation soldier, Sunil Kumar Razdan was born to late Shri R C Razdan on October 8, 1954, in Happy Valley, Shillong Meghalaya. Shri R C Razdan was an officer in the British Army. Sunil had his initial education in Rockwell Calanay Higher Secondary School and Government Inter College at Mathura. He obtained his Master's degree in mathematics from Agra University.

A fitness freak since childhood, his entry into the Great Indian Army is attributed to a challenge thrown at him by a friend. One day, while in the library, his friend was filling up some forms. Sunil asked him about the forms and his friend replied that these

were for joining the Army. He also added a sarcastic taunt that this was not Sunil's cup of tea and being a Kashmiri Pandit, he should take up some bureaucratic or a teaching job. Sunil immediately took up the challenge, obtained the forms and submitted them.

After going through a rigorous selection procedure, Sunil qualified whereas his friend could not. Sunil joined the Officers' Training School at Chennai in 1976. On successful completion of his training, he obtained the President's commission and joined the elite Parachute Regiment in 1977.

With this began an illustrious saga of his military career wherein he held various Command and Staff assignments. A career punctuated with stories of exceptional bravery and leadership through personal example, he acquitted himself with élan in all the tasks of military operations as also awards for distinguished service as given below:

Chief of Army Staff's (COAS) commendation for gallantry---1980

Chief of Army Staff's (COAS) commendation for gallantry-1994

Kirti Chakra (Ashok Chakra Class II) for gallantry-1996

DRDO Outstanding Performance Award-2000

Chief of Army Staff's Commendation-2003

GOC-in-C Commendation-2006.

I will now attempt to put into words his act of exceptional gallantry for which the President of India awarded him the Kirti Chakra, which is the second highest peacetime award for gallantry.

In the year 1994, while posted in J & K, then Lt. Col. Sunil Kumar Razdan was deployed for counter insurgency operations in the general area south of Kulgam. Having earned great reputation among the locals of that area, a group of local Muslim villagers approached him one day with the sad news that 14 of their lady folk including unmarried girls, had been abducted by a group of terrorists apparently belonging to Lashkar-e-Toiba.

They informed him that they had taken these women to higher altitudes in the the forests for obvious sexual pleasure. They pled with him for help in the early restoration of these women. Having listened to their woeful plea, Sunil obtained permission from his superiors for launching a search-cum- rescue operation.

After going through a cross-country treacherous trail into the mountain forests, questioning all humanity that came their way, he and his party were able to gain specific inputs on the exact whereabouts of this group of terrorists in his area of operation. Having made a quick assessment, he along with his party launched an operation against the militants in their hideout.

A 32-hour gun battle ensued after which the hideout was neutralized. The party, with Sunil in the lead, in absolute disregard to his personal safety, stormed the hideout. The bullets were still flying as the hideout was being stormed. On entering the hideout, he saw three terrorists lying in a pool of blood with weapons still in their hands.

On closing in, while he was crossing over one of the bodies, the cowardly terrorist posing as dead, suddenly turned round and pumped a shower of bullets into Sunil's abdomen at point-blank range. He shot the terrorist dead while holding his abdomen with one hand. He felt excruciating pain and saw the intestinal loop coming out of his abdomen.

He pulled off his parka (a large black cloth worn on the head during operations), collected his intestines and tied the parka around his abdomen to hold them from falling out. He also found that he could move no longer (a bullet had pierced through his spine, thus paralyzing him). He continued to exhort his men, refused to be evacuated a little to the rear and continued to direct the operation from there itself until all terrorists (totaling nine from the Mast Gul faction) were killed and all women rescued.

All the 14 Muslim women were then restored to their families. Sunil was carried down on a stretcher. He had sustained grievous injuries and was evacuated to a military hospital in a helicopter. Thereafter, for a year or so, he battled with his injuries with death and a series of surgical procedures.

He once again came out victorious, although paralysed below waist. He continues to battle his handicap, drives his own modified car and remains selflessly dedicated to work. His awards for distinguished service after his injury are ample testimony to his continued zest for living a full life. Sunil is presently posted as Deputy Assistant Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (Organisation) in the Headquarters of Integrated Defence Staff.

I will be failing in my duty if I do not mention the brave lady who has stood by his side through thick and thin. Mrs Manju Razdan nee Tiwari is of a great lineage. Grand daughter of Sri Sri 108 Swarupanand Saraswati of Kashipeeth, the couple is blessed with two sons, Nishant and Parth.

Our community stands proud to have amongst them a military leader of repute who has displayed conspicuous bravery while in command of his troops in operations and rendered distinguished service while on staff assignments. I exhort all my community members to follow in his footsteps, give everything in the service of the motherland and dispel the common notion of our cowardice. There are many such other military leaders in our community whose brave deeds we need to publicise. ---Our tribute to these selfless soldiers.”

--Dr. M L Hashia, in Koshur Samachar, Nov. 2007

Lt.Pushkar Nath Zadu

He was Pandit Vasu Dev Zadu’s son. His father was highly qualified engineer who served the State P.W.D. until 1928, when he retired as a Superintending Engineer. When the Kabailie invasion took place in 1947, he played a significant role in organizing defence against possible raid on Srinagar, which was until October 26 quite a distinct possibility.

It was natural that his son who was barely 20 volunteered to join the hastily raised Jammu and Kashmir Militia, which was organized under the leadership of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed. Two battalions were raised and Colonel B.M.Kaul (later Lt. General) of the Indian Army was made its commanding officer.

Before Kaul’s arrival in Srinagar, however, one battalion was hastily sent to Tithwal in which Vasu Dev Zadu’s son Lt.Pushkar Nath Zadu served. The Kabailies were trying to sneak through that direction to Srinagar. It was imperative that the invaders should be somehow stopped until help arrived.

In the severe fighting that ensued, the Kashmir Militia was poorly equipped to tackle the tribals who were equipped with latest weapons and were led by serving experienced officers and J.C.Os. Lt.Zadu was hit in a firefight while leading his platoon against the enemy. He was instantly killed when he was hit by a bullet barrage . He was perhaps the first officer of the J & K Militia to be killed in action.

I remember the day he was killed. That evening Radio Kashmir announced the martyrdom of Lt. Zadu in defence of Kashmir. It’s a pity that his services were not recognized, nor has the Pandit community remembered him anywhere so that posterity might record his supreme sacrifice in defence of the Motherland.

Lt.General Kaul has in his book “The Untold Story”, 1967 mentioned his taking over of the J&K Militia:

“When I first reached Srinagar (April, 1948), Sheikh Abdullah, arranged for me a huge rally of the Militia I was taking over. He was there himself and introduced me to this force, relating how hurriedly it was raised when Pakistan attacked Kashmir and describing brave deeds by many Kashmiris including Zadu who sacrificed his life near Tithwal.....”

Captain Dina Nath Zadu

As with the Atal family in the plains, so with the Zadu family. From this family, came Captain Dina Nath Zadu and his colleague Kanti Chander. Captain Zadu and Kanti Chander were two Kashmiri Pandits who joined the Indian National Army (INA of Netaji Subhash Chandar Bose).

On July 5,1943 these two Pandits joined the INA and one of them, Kanti Chander who was also, apart from being a soldier, private secretary to Netaji. In August 1945, Japan

had lost the war, and on August 18th 1945, Netaji was killed in a plane crash in Taiwan and so also his private secretary Kanti Chander.

Captain Zadu joined the Provincial Armed Constabulary (PAC) in U.P at Meerut and subsequently retired and passed away there.

19

What Others Say

The qualities ascribed to the Pandits range from clever, intelligent, brilliant, innovative, adventurous to cunning, deceitful, intriguing and untrustworthy. It is both a combination of bouquets and brickbats. Whatever it is, let us take a look at what others think of us and our own estimation of ourselves, given by a Pandit in Lahore in 1894.

“The Kashmiri Pandit”, wrote Aldous Huxley after a visit to Kashmir, in 1926, “has more than a Spanish objection to manual labour. But unlike the Hidalgo, who thought himself dishonoured by the exercise of any profession save that of arms, the Pandit is ambitious of wielding only the pen”

Aldous Huxley in Jestling Pilate, London, 1927,

Quoted by Dr.Kusum Pant in The Kashmiri Pandit 1987.

Mr.George Campbell, who visited the valley, has this to say:

“The Kashmiri Brahmins are quite high Aryans in the type. Their features are very fair and handsome, with high chiseled features and no trace of inter-mixture of the blood of any lower race. It may be partly race and partly occupation but they have certainly a great refinement and regularity of feature ...they rule by the brain and the pen and not by the sword. It is this characteristics that has gained them the favour of so many rulers of a different faith.

Kashmir long belonged to the Kabul Kingdom, but it was never in any degree colonized by the Afghans...The fact seems to be that the valley never belonged to the Afghan nation, but was always retained as a crown appendage of the kings who were very jealous of admitting into it subjects whom they might find it difficult to turn out again and much preferred to govern through the Pandits

George Campbell in Ethnology of India.

“Kashmiri Brahmins, to which class Pandit Moti Lal Nehru belonged, are well known all over the north of India both for their intellectual powers and fine appearance. They are by birth, what may truly be called, an aristocratic race, and easily recognized as such. Moti Lal was typical of this distinguished class and in his old age he gained the reputation of being the “Aristocrat of the Assembly”.

His spotless Khaddar dress, with his white hair and his portrait is rightly given the place of honour in his son’s Autobiography. The fine features, which I have mentioned and the fair complexion run through the whole family and have descended from father to son”.

C.F.Andrews, who wrote the above, known all over India as Deenabandhu, was a member of a small band of Englishmen who strongly supported India's aspirations and struggle for complete independence from British rule. Of course, he is talking about Pandit Moti Lal Nehru father of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India.

“The population of the whole Kashmir State is 2,905,578, and that of the Kashmir Province 1,157,394. of these, 93 per cent of the Kashmir Province and 74 per cent of the whole state are Mohamedan, and the remainder chiefly Hindu. But the rulers are Hindu, and consequently the Mohammedans are as much in the shade as Hindus are in states ruled by Mohammedans. The ruling family is also alien, coming not from the valley itself, but from Jammu, on the far side of the mountain to the south.

The inhabitants were not, however, always Mohammedans. Originally, they were Hindus. It was only in the fourteenth century that they were converted—mostly by force—to become Mohammedans. The present indigenous Hindus of the valley are generally known as Pundits, and Kashmir Pandits are well known over India for their acuteness and subtlety of mind, their intelligence and quick-wittedness

They prefer priestly, literary, and clerical occupation, but in their severe competition of life, may have been compelled to make more use of their hands than their brains, and have had to take up agriculture, and become cooks, bakers, confectioners, and tailors, and, indeed, to follow any trade except the following which, according to Lawrence, are barred to them—cobbler, potter, corn-frier, porter, boatman, carpenter, mason, or fruit-seller.

It is hard for us occidentals to understand why the line should have been drawn at these apparently harmless occupations, but those of us who have lived in India know that the Hindu does fix his lines with extraordinary sharpness and rigidity, and a Kashmiri Pandit would as much think of working as a boatman as an English gentleman would think of wearing a black tie at a formal dinner-party.

The Kashmiri Pandits are essentially townspeople, and out of the total number about half live in the city of Srinagar. But they are also scattered sparsely through the villages, where the visitor will easily distinguish them by the caste mark on the forehead. On the whole, they have a cultured look about them and a superior bearing.”

Sir Francis Younghusband in Kashmir, London 1909

“Kashmiri Pandits of Kashmir and North India considered Government Service to be one of the most prestigious occupations for members of their community”

Dr.Kusum Pant , The Kashmiri Pandit , 1987

“The Hindus are with few exceptions Brahmans, and are commonly known as Pandits. They fall into three classes: astrologers (Jyotishi), priests (Guru or Bachabatt), writers and clerks (Karkun). The priest class does not intermarry with the others, but the Jyotishi and Karkun classes intermarry.

The astrologers are learned in the shastras and expound them, and they draw up the calendars in which prophecies are made as to the events of the coming year. The priests perform the rites and ceremonies of the Hindu religion. But the vast majority of the Brahmans belong to the Karkun class. Formerly, they obtained employment from the state, but recently they have taken to business, and some work as cooks, bakers, confectioners, and tailors. The only occupations forbidden to a Pandit are those of the cobbler, potter, corn-frier, porter, boatman, carpenter, mason, and fruit-seller

Many Pandits have taken to agriculture, but the city Brahmans look down on any profession save that of writing, and they would never think of marrying a daughter to a Pandit cultivator. They have no real aptitude for business, or they might have found great openings in trade in Srinagar under the new regime. They cling to the city, and if they obtain employment outside they leave their wives and families behind them. They are a handsome race of men, with fine well-cut features, small hands and feet, and graceful figures. Their women are fair and good-looking, more refined than the Musalmans. The children are extremely pretty.

The Pandits are broken up into numerous gotras; but though the Pandit repeats the name of his gotra seven times as he performs his ablutions, the outside world knows him only by his kram (Surname). Marriage within the gotra is forbidden, and the Kashmiri Pandits do not intermarry with the Brahmans of India. Among the leading krams may be mentioned the following: Tiku, Razdan, Kak, Mushi, Mathu, Kachru, Pandit, Sapru, Bhan, Zitshu, Raina, Dar, Fotedar, Madan, Thusu, Wangnu, Mujju, Hokhu, and Dullu. The descendants of the Brahmans, said to be only eleven families, who survived the persecutions of Sikandar Shah and remained in the valley, are known as Malmas. The others, descended from returned fugitives, are called Banamas.

Kashmir And Jammu, Sir Walter Lawrence.

Karkuns According To Need

“The Brahmans of Kashmir, commonly known as Pandits , are 60,316 in number, of whom 28,695 live in Srinagar and the towns. The rest are scattered about in the villages and are for the most part about in the villages and are for the most part engaged in agriculture. The Pandits divide themselves into three classes in Kashmir:

The astrologer class (Jyotish), the priest class (Guru or Bachabat), and the working class (Karkun). The priest classes do not intermarry with either of the other classes, partly because they are regarded as divine and cut off from mankind, and partly because the laity abhor their practice of accepting the apparel of deceased Hindus, but the Jyotish and Karkun Pandits intermarry. The Jotish Pandits are learned in the Shastras and expound them to the Hindus, and they draw up the calendars in which prophecies are made as to the events of the coming year.

The priest class performs the rites and ceremonies of the Hindu religion. The vast majority of the Pandits belongs to the Karkun class and have usually made their livelihood in the employment of the State. But as State employment became harder to obtain and the numbers of the Pandits increased, the Brahmans of Kashmir sought other occupations, and many of them are in business, while others work as cooks, bakers, confectioners, and tailors. Briefly, it may be said that a Pandit may follow any trade or occupation except those of the cobbler, potter, corn-frier, porter, boatman, carpenter, mason, or fruit-seller.

Pandits have been known to adopt the profession of acting and music, and a Pandit now in my employment was once a cavalry soldier in the army of His Highness the Mahrana of Oodeypore. In 1894 many Pandits were working as daily labourers on the river embankments.

As time goes on these intelligent and quick-witted people will no doubt take to new occupations. But at present the Karkun Pandit regards the pen as his natural destiny, and though many have taken to agriculture and many more are looking to land as a means of employment and subsistence, they would infinitely prefer to spend their lives as clerks in some office. The Pandits of the villages consider it no degradation to follow the plough and to carry manure; but the city Pandit, who has not served himself from the literary atmosphere of the capital, is inclined to look down upon the Brahman agriculturist, and through he will take a wife from the villages he will not, if a man of any position, permit his daughter to marry into a village family.

At the present time no Pandit serving out of Srinagar would dream of taking his wife and family with him. In Kashmir, as in other countries, a man's occupation is the chief test of his social position, and it is quite possible that as agriculture becomes more profitable and popular, and as life in the city becomes harder and meaner, posterity may see the position reversed, and the Brahman of the village declining to give his daughter in marriage to the Srinagar Pandit. The future of the city Pandits is a matter of some anxiety. They have not the keen trading instinct of the natives of the Panjab, and may neglect the chances of commerce, which easier communications with India should now offer.

They are extremely conservative and shortsighted, and cannot believe that the old system, under which every adult Pandit had a finger in the collection of revenue, has passed away. They are deeply attached to their country, and though Kashmiri Pandits have risen to distinction in India, the large number of unemployed Brahmans of Srinagar will not seek service in the Punjab while it is possible to eke out a bare subsistence in the valley.

Every city Pandit is desirous for the education of his children, and in Srinagar this, thanks to the free schools of the State and the Church of England Mission, can be easily acquired. I have had over 500 Pandits trained in mensuration, and the men who have taught them state that they are much quicker than the Punjabis. Their weak point is arithmetic. The Pandits are a handsome race of men, with fine, well-cut features, small hands and feet, and graceful figures. Their women are fairer than those of the Punjab, they are distinctly good-looking, and show more signs of refinement and breeding than the Musalmanis. The Hindu children are extremely pretty.

The Valley of Kashmir, Walter R. Lawrence, Vitasta, Calcutta (1998-99).

“They (Kashmiri Pandit) are a heaven-born people”

B.C.A. Lawther, I.G.P., Jammu and Kashmir State 1931 – 32 who served with Raja Hari Kishen Kaul in N.W.F.P when Kaul became the Deputy Commissioner of Peshwar district and Lawther was D.I.G., C.I.D. of the Province.

“Kashmiri Pandits rule by the brain and the pen and not by the sword... they are perfectly versatile ... and will mount a horse, gird on a sword, and assume at a push a semi-military air*1. Pushed as they were by the military nature of the state, Kashmiri Pandits in the latter half of the eighteenth century, also moved from positions in the civil service into posts in the army. In 1773, for instance, we learn from an entry made under the signature of one Atma Ram Kichlu in the Bahi of the Kashmiri panda or tirth purohit, the recognized hereditary priest of the Kashmiris at the Hindu holy place of Allahabad with the army of Shah Alam II in 1773,” states the bahi, “and the Kashmiri Pandits in the employ of the Emperor’s army had a bath in the waters of the river Ganga”.

Although it is not clear whether Kashmiri Pandits in Delhi engaged in actual warfare, we know that they were attached as munshis or bakshis in army regiments of the Mughal and other powers in and around Delhi in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.”

(*1. Views of Justice Campbell cited by H.R. Gupta, Life and works of Mohan Lal Kashmiri, Lahore, 1943.

*2. Translated from account given in the bahis of Kashmir Panda, Chuni Lal of Allahabad).

An English observer in the 19th century. The Kashmir Pandit, 1987, Kusum Pant.

Pandits' Estimate Of Quality And Aspirations

“A Kashmiri Pandit witness examined during the course of the Civil and Military Gazette Defamation Case in 1894, made the following statement about members of his community: “The increase of one’s influence depends that he should be since two or three generations Khandani (great family) and has served in Native State and British territory on high posts, and he has good repute and is honest in dealings and that he has married in good families.”

Tribune, Lahore, 3 February 1894.

Pandit Self – Portrait

“My caste is Kashmiri Pandit
By God I have been granted superior
Excellence,
Acuteness of apprehension and a
Virtuous disposition,
And above this a fair skin.
All munshis and mistris gave up
Before the force of my pen,
Everyone admitted defeat before me,
Whether he be a fool or a wise man.”

“Young and old, rich and poor, men and women,
The hearts of all overflowed with attachment
To religion.
Let us lose our lives, they said,
But not our Brahman name.”

“The condition of the education of our boys is such,
No sooner do they cross the marsh of the
Entrance examination,
They think they are as great as Rustam.
They then will have nothing to do with a
B.A or any other degree.
Their worry then is to get a job in the Railway Department.
Even if they earn only ten rupees,
They fell their problems are all over”

Sheo Narain Raina, ‘Shameem’ in The Kashmiri Pandit by Kusum Pant, 1987.

C.E.Tyndale Biscoe, the father of Public Education and Popularization of English in Kashmir Valley who came to Kashmir in 1890 has this to say about Kashmiri Pandits

“The Brahmins are a proud people, for besides being twice born, they hold they are part of God. The boys told me that they could not commit sin and when they were caught in their various acts of transgression, which I considered against the moral laws, they always said that they were only following the custom of their fathers and forefathers and, therefore, felt no shame”

Crescent Over Kashmir , Anil Maheshwari.

Persecution And Forced Exodus

“They (Kashmiri Pandits are a very intelligent and intellectual race of men, of excellent manners, and often very charming and amusing companions. They are fluent and ready writers. They can undergo great strain and fatigue when necessity arises, in spite of their soft, gentle appearance. They often amass great wealth in a short time, but they are very generous and lavish in their expenditure, and their money soon goes. It is to be regretted that they have not built any work of public utility in their beloved city.

Lawrence mentions that Kashmiris normally like to stay and work in the Valley of Kashmir, quoting a Kashmiri proverb “chari chu kand thari peth karar” meaning that a bird is content when it is rested on its branch with thorns. How much has world changed since the last hundred years for KPs? A handful of people are now scattered all over the world, a global diaspora indeed.”

Vitasta, Prof. S.Bhatt, Calcutta, 99-2000.

The Eleven Families

“Then we also know full well that at one point of time during the rule of Sikander Butshikan in Kashmir between 1389 and 1413 A.D. only eleven families of the Kashmir Pandits remained in the Valley when his Prime Minister Malik Saif –ud-Din who was himself a convert (Suha Bhatt) unleashed a reign of terror on the innocent Kashmiri Pandits, but even then he was not able to wipe out this community completely from the mother planet although he succeeded in dividing the community for the first time into two distinct groups known as Malmasi and Bhanmasi.

It is also a historical fact that a very large number of Kashmiri Pandits migrated from the Kashmir Valley during the Afghan rule (1753-1819 A.D) especially in the period of Lal Khan Kattak, Faqir Ullah and Jabbar Khan to avoid religious persecution and other barbaric acts against them. We should also keep in mind that prior to this a big migration of Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley also took place during the rule of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb (1658-1707) when Iftikhar Khan (1671-1675 AD) who was appointed as a Subedar of Kashmir by the Mughal emperor started mass killings of the Kashmiri Pandits and their forcible conversion on a very large scale. Here we should also not forget that the conditions prevailing at that time were much worse than what they are now as both the means of transport and communications were not developed at all in the difficult terrain of Himalayas at that time and the migrants used to walk on foot under the cover of darkness through thick forests at night to escape detection and to avoid the wrath of the barbaric fundamentalist forces.

Vitasta , Dr.B.N.Sharga, Calcutta, 99-2000

Kusum Pant in her book “ The Kashmir Pandit” says:

“According to the traditional account, the first migration of Kashmiri Pandits from Kashmir took place during the reign of Sultan Sikandar (1389-1413), nick-named Butshikam (or iconoclast). As a result of the religious persecution of Sultan Sikandar, runs the account, only eleven families of Kashmiri Pandits in Kashmir were able to retain their religion. All the others were either killed converted to Islam or were forced to flee from the Valley. Later many of the Pandit émigrés are believed to have returned during the reign of the new sultan, Zainulabidin (1420-1470), who promised them religious freedom, and offered government appointments to those who would learn Persian, which he introduced as the new official language in Kashmir.

Before proceeding further, let us pause to examine the plausibility of this account. That such a migration of Kashmiri Pandits could have taken place in the fourteenth century cannot be denied. Hindu and Muslim historians of Kashmir are unanimous in maintaining that Sultan Sikandar practiced religious persecution*1. Moreover, even today it is possible to divide Kashmiri Pandits into those descended from families who migrated from Kashmir during the reign of Sultan Sikandar (called Bhanmasis) and those who did not (called Malmasis). Though the two groups intermarry freely, the former follow the solar, and the latter the lunar form of the astronomical calendar*2. However, since Kashmiri Pandits of Northern India generally claim descent not from the fourteenth century immigrant families, but from those of a much later migration, let us turn to the traditional account of Kashmiri Pandits regarding the latter migration.

The traditional account states that a second migration of Kashmiri Pandits was caused by the religious persecution practiced by the Muslim Afghan rulers of Kashmir in the eighteenth century. Both Kashmiri Pandits of Kashmir and of northern India in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries spoke of the Afghan rulers of Kashmir as cruel oppressors. A well-known proverb among Kashmiris in Kashmir stated that the callous Afghans “thought no more of cutting off heads than of plucking flowers*3” “I enquired of the gardener,” wrote a Kashmiri poet, “the cause of the destruction of the garden. Drawing a deep sigh he replied, it is the Afghans who did it*4” similarly the picture of Afghan rule in Kashmir painted by Kashmiri Pandit poets and writers of northern India such as Bishan Narain Dar is one of intolerable oppression*5. The general belief is that the Hindus of Kashmir were persecuted so severely by the Afghans that with the exception of the Kashmiri Pandits, all the other Hindus of Kashmir converted to Islam. Kashmiri Pandits being the highest caste of Hindus, generally refused to be converted and were either killed or compelled to leave their homeland in order to save their religion.

(*1. R.K.Parmu, A History of Muslim Rule in Kashmir, Delhi, 1969.

*2. M.L .Zutshi, and P.N.K.Bamzai

*3. Cited in Walter R.Lawrence, The Valley of Kashmir,Srinagar.1967.

*4.Cited in P.N.K .Bamzai.

*5.B.K.Kaul and J.N.Raina.)

Holding On Despite Pressure

In an appeal in 1990-91, the Save Kashmiri Pandit Campaign Committee has stated: “To have been known as a Kashmiri Pandit has been a matter of pride for everyone of us and envy to others. Carving his own distinctive way of life, the Kashmiri Pandit has been able to hold fast to it despite tremendous pressure and trials and tribulations he suffered from time to time at the hands of tyrannical rulers and inquisitors. He has tried to imbibe something of the loftiness of the mountains that surrounded him, and drank uninhibitedly at the fountain of knowledge.

“The Kashmiri Pandit has its own pantheon of gods, his own circuit of temples and shrines – Tulamula (Kheer Bhawani), Chakreshwari (Hari Parbat), Lok Bhawan, Nagbal and Umanagri (Anantnag), Bhadrakali Teerath (Kupwara) and the shrines of Alakh Devi and Rishi Peer (Srinagar) and, of course, the famous Amar Nathji cave tucked deep in the high Himalayas. The same Kashmiri Pandit, alas, appears to have been stripped of his right to live in the land of his ancestors. All his gods at the moment are unable to help him for they are locked in their sanctums with no one to look after them.

“Today, Islamic fundamentalism has struck Kashmir in its most pernicious form aiming to wipe out all vestiges of ‘Kafir’ existence and making Kashmiri Pandits the prime targets of its fury. Harassed and haunted by the Pak-trained terrorists for being visible manifestations of Indian nationalism, the Pandits have been forced to abandon their homes and hearths, leaving all movable and immovable property and educational careers behind and taking refuge at Jammu, Delhi and others places. An ominous blow was struck on April 14, 1990 when terrorists issued a warning that the Pandits should leave the Valley within 48 hours. If they dared to return, the punishment would be death. And death it has been ever since. A whole community is on the hit list”.

Anil Maheshwari , Crescent Over Kashmir.

20

THE BRIDGES OF SRINAGAR

Srinagar has gone through many changes in the last over 2000 years after Ashoka built it around 250 B.C. As most of the buildings in the city were wooden structures, the city got burnt down several times and was rebuilt several times. It has undergone change, but it essentially remains the same. Even the spelling of the name has had variations. In the Sanskritised version it was spelt as Shrinagar or Shreenagar or as Vigne has put it Siri Nagur. However, since the last 100 years the spelling has stabilized as Srinagar.

Of course, many were left out from the mainstream, especially those who lived in the villages who at one time out-numbered the city dwellers by nearly 10,000. According to the 1921 census, more than 30,000 were living in the rural areas and only about 20,000 in the city of Srinagar.

They certainly had been left out. It is a sad but true fact that the smaller the community, the larger the divisions. And the Kashmiri Pandit community illustrates it best. For such a small community, we have Malamasis and Bhanamasis, Gamuk (Villager) & Shaharuk (City dweller), Karkun (Service) and Gor (priest). And to top it all, not one Pandit will acknowledge the leadership of another. That is why the community has remained largely leaderless.

However, one has to explain as to who is what and where? We shall explain, as far as information is available, the localities by description and any peculiarities of the area as also the prominent community members who lived there.

At this length of time, it is difficult to pinpoint all the prominent people and their location in Srinagar city. Lest we forget some names because of lack of information with regard to the location of their homes, it would, in the opinion of the author be best to mention their names first. Most of them who can be called as prominent members of the modern age of the community were people engaged in various professions with a sprinkling of people in politics

So far as the armed forces are concerned, Pandits got into the services in fair numbers only after 1947. However one young jewel who was cruelly cut down in the flower of his youth has, today, been largely forgotten by the community. His story begins with the Kabailie invasion of Kashmir in October 1947 and the hurried attempts by the National Conference to create a State Militia. He joined and a unit was sent after basic training to the front.

Lt. Pushkar Nath Zadu, for that was his name, fought as best as he could against the invaders but was unfortunately killed. He became a martyr, a shaheed, but sadly enough after the initial reaction was largely forgotten. The author, who was then just eight years old, heard the street gossip, but did not hear it himself that Radio Kashmir had announced

his death during one of its broadcasts. The saddest part of it was that I did not even know his full name and family background.

In “Martial Pandit”, we tried to describe the glorious sacrifice and brave deeds of the sons of our community many of whom reached high ranks and otherwise distinguished themselves in their own fields. However, since our story concerns people in the Valley, the period between the 30s and 70s would describe the overall progress of the community through its distinguished sons.

In the field of politics, activity began after 1931. Prior to the Dogra rule, politics and military, economics and agriculture were all centered in one person who wielded the ultimate power. Only in the 20th century, did politics emerge as a separate field. Apart from R.C .Kak, who by virtue of his position as the Prime Minister of the State, had to be deal with political issues, which in most cases was to curb political activity in the State, there were only a few.

One of the most distinguished members of the community was certainly Durga Prasad Dhar (D.P.Dhar) who hailed from an aristocratic family . The word for aristocrat in Urdu and Kashmiri is rais. D.P. as he became known had very good education and did his postgraduate studies at Lucknow University and soon was in politics by joining the National Conference. After 1947, he became a member of the Kashmir cabinet and later on, at the Central level, he became an ambassador and a Minister.

Along with D.P, there were Shyam Lal Saraf and Shiv Narain Fotedar. While the former was a Minister, the latter topped off by becoming the Chairman of the Legislative Council. One of the earliest to join politics was Dawarka Nath Kachroo who worked as Nehru’s aide. Unfortunately, he was killed in an air crash. Shiv Narain Fotedar too had a political background. He was the son of Pandit Har Gopal’s daughter. **Har Gopal was the first politically conscious Pandit in the valley.**

In every community, we have those who were traditional leaders being mostly landed gentry. Apart from Balkak Dhar ,there were Tot Kaul Jalali, father of T.N.Kaul ICS the only, Valley batta (Kashmiri Pandit) who made it to the steel frame, Jia Lal. Khod, was a businessman. Sat Lal Sadhu, Sarwanad Shayir and Radha Kishen Moza were prominent business men among Pandits. Dr.Ghash Lal Kaul and Dr. Govind Joo Vaishnavi **were the first foreign returned doctors. Lamboodar Nath Zutshi was the first Ph.D** in the community and the entire Valley. He completed his doctorate in chemistry from London University. There were many others whose wealth was in property and land. A small number were also money lenders.

One man stands out and that is Kashyap Bandhu who was I think, at this length of time, did a lot of good to us. We did not deserve him. He was a Social Reformer incarnate. What he did to reform our outdated customs and the changeover from the pheran to the dhoti was at that time as revolutionary as the landing of the man on the moon. It will take volumes to discuss the impact of his invaluable work for the community. He gave life to

Martand town and the glorious ancient temple which was the valley's first university, and gave the community through it a collective voice. Many are the people who recently wanted to revive it to its old glory. One hopes that it happens.

To get one's bearings right, one has to look at the topography of the place. The city of Srinagar is bisected by the river **Jhelum** flowing into the city from Verinag side in southern Kashmir and coming out into the **Wullar Lake**.

On both sides of the Jhelum River in the Srinagar city, there are people living and linked to the river. Numerous bathing ghats dot the banks of the river, which was spanned by seven bridges, which have now gone up to, nine bridges. The city is surrounded by water, practically on all sides.

Running parallel to the Jhelum is the **Chunt Kol**, a canal directly West of the river. Again parallel to that is another waterway called **Doodh Ganga**. On the Eastern bulge of the city is **Dal Lake** and parallel to the Northern part of the Dal Lake towards its west was the Nala Mar. Originally, most of the traffic was through boats. Boats are still there as are the bigger ones called **Dhoongas** and houseboats, which mainly ply on the Dal Lake. Nala Mar is now turned into a road.

Beginning from the south of Srinagar, we start from **Sonawar** and **Shivpora**, as also **Indira Nagar**. Some Pandits live there. This is in effect the new area of the city adding itself to the old Civil Lines. Many Pandits living in the interior of the city bought land here and built modern houses for themselves. Going across the **Zero Bridge** we come to **Rajabagh** adjacent to which is the **Convent College**. This bridge was built after 1947 along with Badshah Bridge near Amira Kadal making in all nine the number of bridges across the Jhelum River in Srinagar. Just a little further, from Rajabagh is a newly established colony named as **Jawahar Nagar**. All this is on the left side or the Western side of the river Jhelum. Here we have also an ancient museum and a library at **Lal Mandi** near Jawahar Nagar.

Coming back to Zero Bridge, it has reduced some burden on Amira Kadal Bridge for vehicular traffic. It is also called **Abdullah Bridge**. It is slightly downstream near the T.V.Station and the Old Residency building now (Kashmir Emporium)

On its Eastern side, we have the **Residency Road**, running along the Pologround. It has now been renamed as **Shaheed Sherwani Road**. Residency Club, **Ahadoos** Hotel, State Bank of India, Head Office of Jammu & Kashmir bank, State Treasury, **Regal** and **Amrishi Cinemas** are some prominent places on this stretch of the road. . The area in front of **Regal Cinema** is called the **Regal Chowk**. While Regal was the second cinema house after **Palladium** in the city Amrishi was built practically adjacent by Amrishi Bahl, the father of famous present day fashion designer of India. Just adjacent to it across the street on the first floor is the **India Coffee House**, which, after it was set up, became a meeting place for the city elite. At the eastern end of the Residency Road, is the **Kashmir Government Arts Emporium**, which was earlier i.e before 1947 the Residence of the British Resident from where he used to launch his intrigues to

undermine the Maharaja. The post of Resident was created by the British in 1885 and lasted till 1947. The Residency building was completely gutted in 1992. It had a beautiful garden, which has survived, a reminder of its past glory.

On the Eastern side of **Indira Nagar** is the **Badami Bagh**, which was during the Dogra rule the cantonment where the army was housed and kept. After the Kabaili raid, and the arrival of Indian Army the same cantonment has been used by the Army. The Cantonment lies on the right bank of the Jhelum on National Highway 1-A. Earlier, the entire area was land with almond gardens and as such was called Badamibagh. In the area adjoining the Maulana Azad Road, was a course made by Maharaja Hari Singh for playing polo. Now used as a park and sports field.

North of **Badami Bagh** near Residency road and the Golf Course is the old **Polo Ground** which has also been used for public meetings. East of **Polo Ground** across the canal linking Dal lake with the Jhelum is the **Dal gate (Gagribal)** from which end at south the **Dal Lake** can be seen. It is so called because of a lock gate built on the exit of Dal Lake to control its water level during floods in river **Jhelum**. British tourists used to live in this area in house boats.

Adjacent to the **Dal Lake** on the eastern side, and the southern rim of Dal Lake runs a road, which was designed originally by a French Engineer and consequently got a French name. It is called the **Boulevard, which** during the Maharaja's rule would see the high officials of the state and European visitors walking in the evening. It was built during Maharaja Hari Singh's time. In the days of yore, when terrorism had not shown its ugly face, people of Srinagar as also tourists from the rest of the country also used to walk on the the Boulevard and after sunset in summer to refresh themselves with the cool breeze from the placid waters of the Dal lake.

During summer, the view from the Boulevard of the **Dal Lake** and the **Nishat Bagh** with the **Harmukh Mountains** in the background is truly breathtaking. The snow-clad peak is visible from the Divar-Parihaspora temple ruins, which is the subject of many folk songs. It is via the Boulevard one can go to the Nishat and Shalimar Gardens. From the beginning, the road was well laid out and was all along maintained well during normal times.

The Boulevard actually skirts a hill adjacent to it on the eastern side on top of which is the **Shankaracharya temple**. It was built by Gopaditya and visited by the great Rishi Shankaracharya whose murti has now been installed on the hill by Dr.Karan Singh. Muslims call this hill **Takht-I-Sulaiman**. Behind the hill is **Drogjan** and next to it **Buchwara** where nearly a 100 years ago there were shawl making units. This is actually old **Bhikshu – Vihar** (original name) near **Drogjan (Durga Jan)** and **Durganag Mandir**. The springs are still intact inside the temple. Recently, within the last 25-30 years, a few Pandits had built their house there. During British rule, a hospital was set up by Christian missionaries where some like Dr.Neve worked. After independence, this hospital at east Drogjan was converted into a hospital for the care of T.B.patients.

Further east of **Buchwara** are two small but well-known centers namely **Zeethyaer** and **Parimahahal**. Zeethyaer dedicated to Zesshta Goddess and Parimahahal got built by Dara Shikoh of the Moghul dynasty for housing a library. In the same line further east, is **Chashma Shahi** where there is a fresh water spring, which is believed to be having miraculous powers if one drinks it. Many people including locals come for picnics to **Chashma Shahi** and after a sumptuous meal drinking the water from the spring is a must, as it has digestive properties.

North-East of **Chashma Shahi** running parallel to Boulevard and the **Dal Lake** is **Nishat, Shalimar and Harwan Baghs** which practically lie in the lap of the majestic **Harmukh Mountain**. They are the famous gardens of Kashmir laid by Moghul rulers. Hence, the name Moghul gardens. This completes the eastern buldge of the city which is known for Dal lake and the Moghul gardens.

Coming back to the western bank of river Jhelum close to **Jawahar Nagar** comes Lalmandi. Further North is the Lal Ded Hospital for women as also the hospital for children. On the same side, are two localities namely Gogjibagh and Wazirbagh where there was a fairly large sprinkling of Pandits and Punjabi traders. On the same side, is Hazuribagh and the Tagore Hall and Amar Singh College. Going down along the eastern side of Jhelum across Lal Mandi is located the **Hadow Memorial School** which was a part of the C.M.S Mission schools of Tyndale Biscoe. Practically adjacent to it, was the residence of Doctor Gwasha Lal Kaul who was one of the first Pandits to qualify as a doctor and go to England for his postgraduate qualification along with Dr. Govind Lal Vaishnavi. After his return from U.K, he took over as Director of Medical Services, Jammu & Kashmir Government. Just adjacent and north of **Regal Chowk** is **Abi Guzar**.

Traditionally, **Amira Kadal** as the name indicates gives the idea of rich people living there. It was also called the first bridge. Actually, it had nothing to do with rich people. It was built by a Governor of Kashmir whose name was Amir Khan. Recently, it has been re-built as an **RCC Bridge** overlooking the Palace of the Dogra Maharajas of Kashmir. Actually adjacent to the bridge it is more of a business locality, which includes **Maisuma Bazar, Badshah Chowk, Kokar Bazar, Lal Chowk** spread around **Palladium Talkies**.

Palladium was in a way a modern landmark of the 20th century which coincided with the arrival of cinema. It was a scene of many romantic episodes in Kashmir's city life. Many a boy and girl romance started in its vicinity. It was reputed to have been owned by a Sikh gentleman who had married a Muslim lady. It was the only cinema in Srinagar for a long time and the younger lot would have the cinema and the film which was then currently running there as a topic of conversation.

If a boy managed to see the film after spending weeks collecting the fabulous sum of seven and a half annas for the ticket, he would be in great demand for telling the story for days together to others of his age who were not so fortunate. The traffic circle in front of the cinema was called Palladium Chowk. After 1947, the name was changed to Lal Chowk (Red Square). This has become a historic place, as it was here that Nehru and

Sheikh Abdullah sealed Kashmir's accession to India in 1947 and Sheikh Abdullah started his Government.

Though **Maisuma Bazar** is now a big street with shops, it was originally a bazaar for the soldiers of the Maharaja's army. Before the abolition of prostitution by Maharaja Hari Singh (1925-1947) the bazaar was notorious as the premier red light area of Srinagar.

Just on the western side of the **Amira Kadal** is the Hanuman **Temple** on the waterfront. Outside the temple, begins the **Hari Singh High Street**, which contains mainly Punjabi shops most of them jewelers, commission agents and bullion merchants. It was till recently the main street of Srinagar.

On the right hand side (east), is the new **Badshah Bridge**. It is on the Vitasta located downstream of Amira Kadal Bridge. On the left abutment of this bridge, are the **State Legislative Assembly** and **Gadhadhar Mandir**. On the right abutment of bridge, we have the **Dashnami Akhara** building and Badshah Chowk from where Amarnath Yatra takes off every year on Raksha Bandan with the holy mace called Chaddi. This bridge was built in the time of Late Bakshi Ghulam Mahommed, Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir (1953-1964).

Behind to the left of **Hari Singh High Street** is the **Silk Factory**, and the Department of Sericulture run by the State Government. This was the most important industry of the State providing employment to thousands. Adjacent to that is **Ram Bagh**, which practically faces the small **Doodh Ganga** waterway. On the South western side are the suburbs of **Barzalla Rawalpura and Rangreth** where Pandits had started shifting from downtown Srinagar thus establishing new colonies.

In **Barzalla** apart from an **Orthopedic Hospital**, one prominent family apart from others lived there. This was the property of Pandit Gana Lal Vakil Dhar. Although his surname was Dhar he was mainly known as Pandit Gana Lal Vakil. He belonged to an illustrious family of orchard owners and lawyers. His brother Pandit Ved Lal Vakil Dhar practised in **Anantnag** and was a prominent member of the Bar there. Within the community Barzalla was known to be his home.

On the western side of the **Doodh Ganga** waterway is a road which ran past the house of Gana Lal Vakil and straight led to the Airport. What the Airport today is, was once an open track with a rough runway that was originally called **Damodar Wudar**. Damodar is obviously some person's name, who owned the land. Hence, the name Damodar Wudar. Wudar means **Karewa (Table land)** Karewa or Wudar means a flat raised ground with slopes on all sides greatly resembling a small plateau. It was in the early 20s an airfield only in name owned privately by Maharaja of Kashmir who had a similar airstrip at Jammu at a place called **Satwari**.

I think the present generation should be grateful to the Maharaja because these two airstrips not only saved the state from Pakistani raiders but also have today become, especially Srinagar, nearly international airports. What a contrast. Just 20 years prior to

1947 only the Maharaja's plane, a **Dakota** would land at Jammu or Srinagar. Today, it is humming with planes taking off and landing. Not only at these airports, but also at Leh in Ladakh which is today the highest commercial airfield in the world, and **Avantipura** and **Kargil**.

South West of **Doodh Ganga** is **Haidarpora** where Pandits also live. Further north is **Batamalu** and **Narasingh Garh** and just adjacent to that is **Balgarden** where a number of Kashmiri Pandits built houses in the 70s and 80s. Residents were mainly middle class Pandits. Most houses were sold by them in 1990-2000 and a new Muslim middle class has now emerged there. Just down below towards north of **Balgarden** is **Karan Nagar**, which incidentally was the **very first modern extension of Srinagar** where large number of Pandits had their houses. This is also known by its original name as **Devan Bagh**.

Beyond **Karan Nagar**, the next landmark is the **S.M.H.S Hospital** built during the Reign of Maharaja Hari Singh on a vast stretch of land purchased from Mr. Hadow (a European) whose carpet manufacturing unit used to be there. Some people still call it as Hadow hospital, one of the earliest besides the **Mission Hospital** in Srinagar. **Kak Sarai** is in the neighbourhood and apparently it belongs to the Kak family of which Pandit Ramchandra Kak (Prime Minister of Kashmir was a member). Next to it is Chattabal, which had a fair sprinkling of Pandits living there. In addition to R.C.Kak, Pandit Tota Kaul Jalalli lived at Chattabal.

Chattabal in relation to the Jhelum River is on the western side practically just ahead of **Safa Kadal** and near the Weir, the lock system that controls the flow of water.

Getting back to the main artery of Srinagar, on the eastern side of the river Jhelum down below the first bridge we come to a slight steep gradient, which was perhaps a poor imitation of modern flyover. The gradient when it starts on the road has on the right side another road, which connects it to **Sathu Barbarshah**. Close to this place, is the **Ratan Rani Hospital** founded by Dr. Omkar Nath Thussu in honour of his deceased first wife who died in tragic circumstances at Khirbhawani, Tula mula. She along with her children had gone for pilgrimage and was staying on the first floor of the shopping complex which caught fire and she was burnt alive along with her children.

The shopping complex inside Khirbhawani was a wooden structure. Halwais ran the shops and as such it was fire prone complex. Dr. Thussu was helped by his second wife Dr. Jagat Mohini who is even today 2002 A.D running the hospital and training nurses. The road which goes further south to **Habba Kadal** is called **Gaowkadal**. **It is from here that you could find a slight concentration of Pandit houses down Habba Kadal and further to Fateh Kadal**. It has a lock gate on the **Chunt Kol** and **Jhelum river** junction. First office of Chief Electrical Engineer located is here.

Sathu Barbarshah was a mohalla famous as the main short route of going to the only college of Kashmir Valley till 1947 Sri **Pratap College** on foot, from downtown Srinagar. Kapoor Brothers, (Book sellers) who were competitors to Mohamed Ali of

Habba Kadal was located on this route. This mohalla has also the location of Sheetal Nath, home of the **Yuvak Sabha of Kashmiri Pandits** and headquarters of **Martand** the KP newspaper. Some prominent K.Ps lived here. Some of them were Pt. Shiv Kaul Middle (Ghasi) Pt. Shyam Lal Dhar who was one of the first K.Ps to become a Secretary to the J & K Government.

Beyond **Gaow Kadal** comes the **Mohallas of Badiyar, Ganapathyar, Drabiyar, Kharyar, Kralkhod, and Somyar temple**. All these small localities on the right bank of Jhelum had a sizeable number of Pandits. The only prominent place in this area is the location of the **Ganapati Temple** on the right bank of river Jhelum. Many annual festivals held here. The name **Ganapatyar** is associated with Kashmiri Pandits "Ghetto". The Ashram of great saint of yore viz Pandit Gopi Nathji is also located near Kralkhod on the right bank of Jhelum down below Ganpatyar.

Kharyar on the right side of the Jhelum. Perhaps donkeys used to be employed to unload and carry paddy from the river. **Drabiyar** on the opposite side perhaps named after many people having the surname "Drabu". **Badiyar** on the right bank. Well to do people lived there, link with the word "Bad" meaning great.

At this point, the road reaches **Habba Kadal**, the old second bridge and the new fourth bridge. Habba Kadal area had the largest concentration of Pandits and used to send one member to the Legislative Assembly, as it was a constituency. Even before the militancy started in 1989, the powers that be had already split the constituency so that the Pandit vote in it got split. This would ensure that there would be no representation for Pandits in the assembly except through the generosity of the ruling party one or two persons would get the ticket either in Srinagar or in **Anantnag** or both.

Habba Kadal was in a way the cultural centre of Pandits. Both on the right and the left side of the bridge there was concentration of Pandits. Early mornings, one could see crowds of Pandits coming out of their houses to buy vegetables at the **Chowk**. At this point, just near the bridge, there is a wide space where vegetable sellers would bring their carts full of fresh Hak, Nadru and other vegetables for sale. The **Chowk** had a few Pandit shops as well selling cloth or general merchants. There was a typewriting institute and an optician in the Habba Kadal square. The famous **Somyar Shiva Temple** is located near the right bank of the river.

Once we cross Habba Kadal from east to west of Jhelum, we reach **Zaindar Mohalla**, Tankipura and Kaini Kadal as also **Karfoli Mohalla**. This area was all having a sizeable number of Pandits living there. All four Mohallas located east of Chunt **Kol** and west of Habba Kadal are located practically opposite to the **Shali store** across the **Kateh Kol**. Shali store was founded by eminent Pandit administrator Raja Narendra Nath Kaul in the 20s. The interesting feature about **Karfoli Mohalla** is its name, comes from "Karra" which means in Kashmiri dry peas.

Zaindar Mohalla has been famous for many events it is close to **Sher Garhi** and the old secretariat. Mohan Kishen Tikku Minister and Pandit Ved Lal Dhar Vakil hailed from

this Mohalla and he was a great musician. Later on, he practiced at the Anantnag court and had a roaring practice. Ved Lal Dhar's daughter distinguished herself as a famous Radio Artiste. In Zaindar Mohalla, there stands a famous shrine called Kathleshwar temple. It is said that one of the Chief Ministers of M.P. Pt. K.N. Katju belonged to the Kathjoo family who had migrated earlier from Kathleshwar Mohalla in Zaindar Mohalla, with the name becoming Katju.

Kaini Kadal is stone bridge on the link Channel of Jhelum River between Shergarhi and Chattabal and the link channel is Chunt Kol, which is the canal emanating from Jhelum near Shergarhi and rejoining the main river down below Chathabal. It helped in draining out excess water of Jhelum river during floods and enabled boat communication with Shali Store for carriage of paddy to and fro.

*On the western side of Badshah bridge, beyond **Shali Store** between Ketah Kol and Doodh Ganga, is the exhibition ground called by the locals as Numais. Further north was Neelam Chowk leading to **Nawabazar**. Coming back to Habba Kadal there were two landmarks there. One was **Tarak Halwai**. In fact, one would identify Habba Kadal with Tarak Halwai, if one wanted to locate a person or a shop or a house. Everything was in relation to Tarak Halwai shop, north of it, south, right, left in front etc., this shop had a special place among the Pandit community.

In the 30s and the 40s and even in 50s Pandits generally did not break the orthodox taboos of eating in any restaurant. But Halwai was exempt. In the evening after five, many a Pandit could be seen buying from Tarak Halwai pakoras, made of basin and nadru, which was very popular as also burfee etc. He (the proprietor Tarak Chand) had put a few benches in front where he would provide his customers milk in a glass which they could drink there itself. For the children, it was a treat to be able to go to Tarak Halwai and buy some delicious eatables.

The other landmark was **Ali Mohamad, Tajer Kutub**, the first ever-famous bookseller who specialized in school and college textbooks. Practically every Pandit has purchased books from him for himself and later for his children. This was a meeting ground for teenagers who would simply hang around and gossip among themselves. The bookshop had a branch in **Maharaj Ganj**. One more landmark was the typewriting institute on the first floor, practically adjacent to the path and the staircase leading down to the temple on the riverbank. A number of generations have learnt typewriting and shorthand in that institute which has helped them to get a job.

One of the greatest landmarks between Haba Kadal and Fateh Kadal was the Ganju House. They were the first carpet dealers of modern times who also manufactured carpets. Factory of Mr. Balji Ganju was burnt down by terrorists in 1990 and the proprietor P.N. Ganju shifted to Delhi. In short the **Habba Kadal** area on both sides of the bridge was the hub of the Pandits community in Srinagar.

On the western side on the narrow road adjacent and running parallel, is **Purshyar, Khardoori and Raghu Nath Mandir**. On the eastern side of the river, going towards Fateh Kadal from Tarak Halwai's shop at Habba Kadal, we come to a small bend on the

road where on the right side was one of the greatest landmark of Srinagar. It was just a little of the main road in the lane that one could see the residence of **Pandit Shyam Lal Bhat** who was a doctor of long standing and highly respected by Pandits and Muslims alike. He was an Indian Medicine Practitioner also called by the people as **Hakim Shyam Bhat**. Mornings and evenings his consulting rooms would be jam packed with people wanting to consult him about their various ailments. He had inherited medicine, as his father was also a reputed Hakim named Pandit Sahaz Bhat. Today his son is also a doctor, albeit an allopathic doctor.

Coming back from the main road is a stately four-storied building belonging to Wazir family. **Professor Nand Lal Wazir** along with another stalwart **Professor Nand Lal Darbari** can be called some of the outstanding teachers of chemistry. There was hardly anybody who went to the only college (S.P.College) and studied science who was not a student of either of these two or few other chemistry teachers. **Prof.Wazir** must have taught many generations of students. This area had a large number of families living there.

Further to the north comes **Chinkral Mohalla**, which was the residence of Pandit Tika Lal Tuploo a lawyer by profession and a political leader of considerable standing who was the first victim of selective murders by the militants when the Pandits were singled out for murder and forced exodus in 1989-90. This mohalla is well known for potters hailing from Mongolia, Tashkent, Sinkiang and making Chinese pottery in Kashmir. The lane leading from the main road into the Mohalla has a mosque facing the main street.

Down this road going northwards comes **Bana Mohalla**, which was so, named after the famous “**Bhan**” clan of Kashmir. Even today the accepted spelling is Bhana Mohalla. Here the concentration of Pandits was considerable and there were a quite few shops on the road belonging to Pandits.

Further down comes **Razdan Kocha** named after great royal priest and landlord of Maharajas Pandit Manas Razdan. He was a saint and was given a jagir by Maharaja Ranjit Singh for performing a religious miracle. He also had an Ashram in Gujarat, Punjab. This landmark is actually not on the main road but half way down in a narrow lane leading to the temple complex called Durga Pathshala. This temple complex was looked after by a committee comprising some respectable members of K.P.Community presided over by Shri N.N.Moza whose house was quite adjacent to the shrine., just before the forced migration of K.Ps is 1989-90.

Linked to **Razdan Kocha** is **Narpirastan**, which can be accessed from the Kocha as also from the main road. Actually, the lane leading to Narpirastan which eventually goes down to the Mar passing the **Nai Sarak** begins with the shrine of Nare Shwari also called Nare Peer by Muslims. Actually, people coming from down town areas like Ali Kadal and Chattabal on the way to office would stand facing little window in the wall where a lamp would be burning and pray. This wall faced the main road on one side and a small graveyard on the other. Professor Dr.O.M.Wakhlou, well-known engineer and hydrology

expert and professor who belonged to Mallapora near Bana Mohalla has fond memories of **Nare Shwari**.

Being a native of Narpirastan, I can recall the prominent ones who lived there in my time. Entering the lane, we had the Kachroos and further down we had the Darbaris. As mentioned elsewhere, Prof. Nand Lal Darbari was a famous teacher of chemistry and his elder brother Jia Lal Darbari was a senior police officer. There were two other brothers Ved Lal Darbari and Somnath Darbari.

Adjacent to the Darbari clan, was the Sapru clan with its little common compound facing three houses. In the newest house built in the 40s lived the families of Pandit Raghu Nath Sapru and Mahadeo Sapru. Directly opposite to this house was the old thatched ancestral house one half of which was occupied by our cousins the eldest among them being Pandit Dina Nath, followed by Pandit Kashi Nath who died early and Pandit Sat Lal. Across the compound adjacent to the Darbaris was another small compound containing slightly removed Sapru cousins led by Pandit Maheshwar Nath, Shivji and Prem Nath.

The rear part of our house faced the house were originally Pandit Dr. Gasha Lal Koul and his younger brother Giridhari Koul lived. Adjacent to their house, lived Pandit Ram Koul. Even while we were there, these gentlemen shifted to more modern localities. Going further down towards Nai Sarak and turning left towards Fateh Kadal, there were two more Pandits families, one was Pandit Radha Kishen Pandita a senior Civil Engineer and further the big house of the Kotru clan.

At one time, when we were young, it was difficult to pinpoint them. One of them was in the Police service G.N. Kotru, IPS, another an Income Tax official another R.N. Kotru also a Civil servant and Pandit Kashi Nath Kotru who was a great friend of my father. Always smartly dressed, well groomed from the tip of his turban to the tip of his shoes, he was smartness incarnate. Many a time, watching him walk past our house, I used to dream of being exactly like him when I grew up.

Adjacent to Nai **Sarak** was a fairly big field where hak (green leafy vegetable) was grown and the farmer would supply all the neighbouring houses including ours. Many a time, I have watched his wife bring the hak and having an extended chat with my aunt. At one time, in the early 40s, a big scandal erupted about this innocent hak field.

It transpired that some rich man wanted to build the second cinema hall in Srinagar (the first being Palladium Talkies at Lal Chowk) on this field. The news spread like wild fire between the second bridge and the seventh bridge. The younger ones were thrilled that there would be a cinema close to their house and dreaming already of ways to cut classes and go and enjoy a film.

But the elders in the community as also the Muslims, neighbours, friends and colleagues all agreed that a cinema in the heart of the city would be very bad for the young people. A massive raging controversy started and the reaction frightened the investor because he had been threatened that the Government would not grant him a licence to run the cinema hall. And strangely enough from that time onwards, no cinema was permitted within the

old city and those, which did come up, did so on the outskirts area such as **Karan Nagar** and **Residency Road**. So much for the dubious distinction of **Narpirastan**.

Further down, comes the small locality of **Malik Aangan**, which originally was a mohalla exclusively for traders, and bureaucrats of the earlier kingdoms. Here too, quite a few Pandits had their houses both facing the road and in the interior as also on the riverside. Further up in the Northerly direction, is Fateh Kadal, which we are told, was built a couple of time. It is in the old sequence bridge no.3 and apparently was named after the man who built it. In modern times, a wooden bridge was replaced by a modern RCC Bridge.

On the western bank of the Jhelum River just before one reaches Fateh Kadal, is the famous Mission School which most of the people identify with the name of Tyndale Biscoe Sahib. This school faces the river on one side and a parallel road to main road on the eastern bank, which we have been describing in this narrative. This school was the forerunner of the modern age in the valley. It brought in English education, discipline, knowledge and learning and lived up to its motto "In all things be men". Great names of modern Kashmir in the 20th century were mostly educated in this school.

One curious fact about the Mission school was its contribution in the field of swimming and rowing and boatmanship. It was curious that until the arrival of Biscoe Sahib on the scene in 1890, not many knew how to swim despite nearly half of the population of Srinagar living on the banks of the river Jhelum. Otherwise also, the whole Valley is dotted with lakes and waterways. Strangest of all, was that Biscoe Sahib discovered that many of the hanjis (boatmen) whose livelihood depended on water, did not know how to swim. It was he who brought the western style designed boats to Kashmir and built them according to British specifications. Even the change over from the Dhoonga to the modern house boats was indirectly influenced by the presence of Biscoe Sahib in the Valley which eventually proved to be a boon for the tourism industry of Kashmir from which even today thousands are earning their livelihood.

The pioneer of boat manufacturing in Kashmir was one Mr.Narain Joo. He was given the nick name of Nav Naran as Nav in Kashmiri means a boat. He had his workshop in a lane on the eastern side of Fateh Kadal near the Government High School of Baghi Dlawar Khan.

After Fateh Kadal, on the right bank of the river which has a spring is dedicated to **Goddess Kali**. As one goes down the river in a boat, one can see the huge stone covered with vermicilian mark giving a total picture of a saffron coloured stone. On the other side of the Kali shrine, is the **Shahamdan Mosque**.

Shadipur used to be called the Prayag of Kashmir. The river Jhelum here is joined by a local River called **Sendh** at this point. Up to 1947, Kumbh Mela also used to be held here every 12 years.

Fairly near to **Mahakali**, is a small locality called **Gankhan** on the eastern side of river. This little mohalla gave India one of its greatest filmmakers, Sri Ramanand Sagar whose home was there. Little further is the branch shop of Ali Mohammad, the famous bookseller, whose main shop was on Habba Kadal. This is very close to Zaina Kadal on its western bank is the **Gurgari mohalla**.

Between Zaina Kadal and Ali Kadal, we have a landmark called **Badshah** stone. Adjacent to that, is **Maharaja Ganj**, the downtown market where mostly Punjabi khattris had their shops, dealing mainly in grain and groceries. Next in line, on the same side of the river, is mohalla named Bulbul Lanker, named after the famous Sufi, Bulbul Shah and practically next door is **Kavdara** a famous place which produces the best Hak (leafy vegetable) in the Valley. Further down, is the waterfront (yaar-bal) of Reshipeer Sahib, famous saint of Kashmir.

Further North comes two places one **Ranga Teng**, to the right of which is **Sekidafer**. A little away one can find the originally residence of Pandit Balkak Dhar, one of the earliest aristocrats. There used to be a hospital for ladies on the western bank of Jhelum at Nava Kadal which was later on shifted to Amira Kadal and called ladies hospital. Now the college for women is housed in the buildings of Nava Kadal hospital.

While most of these places are between Ali Kadal and Nava Kadal, the residence of Balkak Dhar is practically opposite to Safa Kadal. Beyond that, comes weir with sluice gate which controls the flow of water at that point since it leads to the Wular Lake via **Shadipur and Sumbal**, which houses the **Nandakeshwar Bhairav** at Shadipur. Many Pandits used to immerse the ashes of their dead with appropriate religious ceremonies.

East of Sumbal, is the shrine of **Ragniya Bhagawati** known as Kheer Bhawani. In **Tula Mula** village of Ganderbal tehsil.

Further down the river comes the fourth bridge **Zaina Kadal** named after the famous secular king of Kashmir Zain-Ul-Abidin in the 15th century. He was also called by the common people "Badshah" meaning great king. His tomb is near the bridge on the right bank. Waking up to his secular credentials, the post 47 Government of Kashmir built another bridge near Amira Kadal, which is also named after him, but is called Badshah Bridge.

Further down the river, one comes to **Ali Kadal**. The famous shrine of "**Reshi Peer**" known as Peer Pandit Padshah is located near the right bank of the Jhelum near the Ali Kadal bridge. Reshi Peer lived in the 18th century and was reputed have to performed miracles. Once, his wooden sandals (Khrav) was put up against a wild fire in Srinagar which halted its advance. The other sandal of the pair were kept in his shrine up to 1990 when terrorism came to Kashmir. These were shifted and have been kept now at a new shrine in Jammu. His famous prasad used to be a Kulcha, a specially baked biscuit of Kashmir. Close by is **Kavdara near Bodger**. This area is overall described as down town Srinagar. It is fairly near the **Hari Parbat**. Kavdara is famous throughout

Kashmir Valley as the place which produce best quality tasty Hak, which as we all know is the staple diet of the Kashmiris.

Along with the **Shankarcharya hill**, the **Hari Parbat** is a great landmark having both geographic and religious significance. The fort on top of the hill, which in recorded times, was built by Akbar. There is a famous temple of Goddess Sharika on the hill called Chakreshwar. On the other side, is the shrine of **Makhdoom Sahib**, a great Muslim saint. On the third side, is a Gurudwara of Chadi **Padshahi** of Shri Guru Arjun Devji. Hindus used to go around the hill every morning for prayers before militancy started.

After Ali Kadal comes **Safa Kadal**, the seventh bridge on the Vitasta. It used be last bridge, now there is another bridge downstream, which is RCC Bridge near **Noorbagh Shamshan “Cremation Ghat”**.

Located near **Rainawari** , which was for a long time considered a suburb of Srinagar, was a place, which was dreaded by most people who had to pass that way. It was **Malkah** a huge graveyard on the way to Rainawari. Everybody used to hurry up in the evenings to pass this graveyard in daylight on their way home for fear of evil spirits haunting this place.

Rainawari – it literally means abode of Rainas. It is the area facing **Makhdoom Sahib** and **Hari Parbat**. Makhdoon Sahib was a Raina and obviously was converted Islam. As a suburb of Srinagar, Rainawari had its own garden called **Baghi Zooji Lankar**. It is probably a corruption of **Jogi** a small Island in the backwaters of the Dal Lake. **Jogi Lankar** was a name given to a kind of **Dharamshala** which had been opened by the Hindu Kings of Kashmir for Sadhus and Holy men who could stay there and eat free of cost.

In popular parlance, the word **Wir or Weir** meant the lock gate which was built around 1930 to improve navigation in river Jhelum upstream of Chatta Bal and within reach from Amira Kadal . Wir was famous as a main point of trade dependent on carriage of Dhoonga and Bahach boats (barges). In winter when water of tributaries of Jhelum froze, the river was like a concrete road and due to shortage of water, navigation become impossible. To solve this problem, the weir was constructed which enabled maintenance of proper level of water in Jhelum.**Dudh Ganga** is a tributary channel of Vitasta arising from the mountain range of **Yusmarg**. The rivulet flows over white boulders and often water has a milky appearance, hence the name Dudh Ganga (Milk). This river tributary is sacred to the Hindus for performing “Shrad”. Earlier, it passed by **Karan Nagar (Dewan Bagh)** cremation ground. Now it has been diverted due to pressure of urbanization.Near the Karan Nagar area where a local Sarai for traders had been built was named **Kak Sarai**. Close by lived the former Prime Minister R.C.Kak.

(Compiled with kind and generous help from Mr.N.N.Moza and Professor (Dr) Omkar Nath Wakhlu.)

Traditionally, the Jhelum river flowing and bisecting city of Srinagar had seven bridges across it. Its history and folklore always mention and stress the importance of the seven bridges. However after independence, two more bridges were added, one the Zero Bridge, before the original first bridge Amira Kadal. And the second just after Amira Kadal bridge which is today known as Badshah Bridge.

Zero Bridge: Built after 1947 to reduce traffic congestion on Amira Kadal.

Amira Kadal (I) : Named after Amir Khan. Links the uptown area of Srinagar with Important government offices and buildings.

Badshah Bridge : Named after King Badshah. Built after 1947.

Habba Kadal (II): Named after the famous poetess of Kashmir Habba Khatun.

Fateh Kadal (III) : Named after Fateh Khan, a Governor of Kashmir. Around 1860 there used to be a pole with hook on which used to swing bodies of criminals.

Zaina Kadal (IV): Named after Sultan Zain-ul- Abudin.

Ali Kadal (V) : Name after Ali Khan who was son of Zain-ul-a Abudin.

Nava Kadal (VI): Named after Nur-din-Khan in 1666.

Safa Kadal(VII); Safa Kadal is named after Saifulla Khan

21

Gotra

The Enigma of Gotra

Gotra is generally associated with rituals and practices of the Brahmin community all over India. In fact, this is one of the many common threads that run in the vast Hindu world of religion, spirituality and rituals. What was termed as another native superstition has surprisingly shaken our Western educated secularists when it was scientifically proved that Gotra ensures that the gene pool remains not only dynamic but also helps in ensuring a healthy line of people, generation after generation.

The term Brahmana meant originally “one possessed of Brahman”, a mysterious magical force of the type widely known to modern anthropologists by the Melanesian word ‘mana’. It was first applied to the specially trained priest who superintended the whole sacrifice, and was ready to counteract with his magic spells and evil influenced, caused by minor errors of ritual. By the end of the Rig Vedic period, the term was used for all members of the priestly class.

There were other divisions within the order. The brahmanas of the later Vedic period were divided into exogamous steps (gotra), a system which was copied in part by other classes and has survived to the present day. Later the Brahman class formed many castes, linked together by endogamy and common practices. A further division was the sakha or branch, based on the recension of the Vedic texts accepted as authoritative by the family in question.

Gotra – Pravara

The Hindu social order was complicated by other features, which had no other original relationship to class or caste, but were roughly harmonized with them. There were the institutions of ‘gotra and Pravara’, which were in existence in late Vedic times, and probably earlier, and are very important to the orthodox brahmana to this day.

The original meaning of ‘gotra’ is a “cowshed, or a herd of cows”; in the Atharva Veda, the word first appears with the meaning of ‘a class’. Which it has retained with a special connotation. Some ancient Indo European peoples, such as Romans, had exogamous clans as well as generally endogamous tribes. It may well be that the gotra system is a survival of Indo European origin which had developed specially Indian features (this view may not be valid with the negation of Aryan invasion theory in recent times – and it is definite that this is of Indian Origin).

Gotra as it existed in historical times, was primarily a Brahmanic institution, adopted rather half-heartedly by other twice born classes (dwija), and hardly affecting the lower orders. All Brahmins were believed to have descended from one of the rishis or legendary seers after whom the gotras were named. The religious literature generally speaks of seven or eight primeval gotras, (those of Kasyapa, Vasista, Bhṛgu, Gautama,

Bharadwaja, Atria, and Viswamitra.) The eighth gotra, Agastya, is named after the sage who is said to have taken the Vedic religion beyond the Vindhya, and who is a sort of patron saint of Dravidians. His name may have been added to those of the original seven, as the South became progressively Arayanised. These primeval gotras were multiplied in later times by the inclusion of names of many other ancient sages – seers.

Though the gotras perhaps evolved from local units within the Aryan tribe, they had quite lost their tribal character by historical times and Brahmans from the farthest parts of India and of different caste groups might have the same gotra, The chief importance of gotra was in connection with marriage which was forbidden to persons of a common gotra.

The position was further complicated by ‘Pravara’. In the Brahman’s daily worship, He mentioned not only the name of the founder of his gotra, but also the names of certain other sages who were believed to be the remote ancestors and his family. The formula generally contained three or five names, and set up a further bar to marriage for the same names would occur in the Pravaras of families of other gotras. According to the custom, some gotras marriages were impossible with a member of another gotra having one Pravara name in common, while others barred intermarriage only when there were two common names in the Pravaras. Thus matrimonial choice was much restricted, especially when in the Middle Ages the endogamous caste system was fully established.

The social prestige of Brahmans led to the respectable classes adopting a gotra system of some sort. Ksatriyas and Vaisyas took the same gotra names as the brahmans; their gotras, however, were not based on the claim to descent from an ancient sage – seer, but merely on the gotra of the family of brahmans, which traditionally performed their domestic rituals. As imposed on non-brahmans families, the system was quite artificial. Non-brahman families were also expected to take the Pravaras of their domestic priests, but this rule counted for little. The real gotras of Ksatriya and Vaisyas were secular (Laukika) ones, founded by legendary eponymous ancestors. Legal literature takes little note of these secular gotras, but numerous references in inscriptions show that the term was used in the sense of “Sect” or “clan”, and that many non-brahman, gotras existed which do not occur in the lists of any of the law books.

Early law givers take a comparatively liberal view of breaches of gotra regulations. A man marrying a woman of the same ‘gotra’ must perform a ‘candrayana’ penance, a severe fast of a month’s duration, and henceforth maintain his wife as he would a ‘sister’. No stigma attaches to the child of such a marriage. With ruthless logic, however, later jurists declared that this rule applies only to inadvertent marriage within the gotra.

Rules of prohibited degrees were very strict, especially in North India, where even marriages in a caste which disregarded gotra, were forbidden between persons with a common paternal ancestor within seven generations or a maternal ancestor within five. In the Deccan, however, this rule was not strictly followed and there are records of cousin’s marriage even in ruling families.

-Simha.

Sects

As regards the origin of the Kashmiri Brahmins, it is certain that it was a colony of Aryan immigrants from Central Asia (see Rajatarangini I, 34). Their features and fair complexion bespeak them of the inner Aryan race. Thompson writes in this "History of India".

"The Aryans were a long headed race of tall stature with narrow noses and fair complexion. Their purest representatives are found to-day mainly in Kashmir."

Mr. George Campbell in his book "Ethnology of India" says":

"The Kashmiri Brahmins are quite High-Aryan in the type of their features-very fair and handsome, with high chiselled features, and no trace of intermixture of the blood of any lower race. It may be partly race, and partly occupation, but they have certainly a greater refinement and regularity of feature than the Afghans and others of a rougher type, with, however, a less-manly looking physique and a colour less ruddy and more inclining to a somewhat sallow fairness. The high nose, slightly aquiline, but by no means what we call Jewish or nutcracker, is a common type.

"Raise a little the brow of a Greek Statue, and give the nose a small turn at the bony point in front of the bridge, so as to break the straightness of line, you have then the model type of this part of India, to be found both in the living men and in the statues dug up in the Peshawar valley. There are also a good many straight noses, and some varieties, as in all places, but much less departure from an ordinary handsome standard than in most countries. The figure of the ordinary working Kashmiri is strong and athletic.

"But none of them are martial; and the Brahmins are, in this respect, no exception. They rule by the brain and the pen, and not by the sword. It is this character that has gained them the favour of so many rulers of a different faith. Kashmir long belonged to the Kabul Kingdom; but it was never in any degree colonized by Afghans, and is singularly free from any modern intermixture of foreign races. The fact seems to be, that the Valley never belonged to the Afghan nation, but was always retained as a Crown appendage of the kings, who were very jealous of admitting into it subjects whom they might find it difficult to turn out again, and much preferred to govern through the Pandits. Others have, to a great extent, all over Northern India as a very clever and energetic race of office-seekers. As a body, they excel in acuteness the same number of any other race with whom they come in contact."

The Kashmiri Brahmins perform their religious ceremonies and rites according to the Vedas of Laugakshi Rishi and the Nilamatpurana . They freely partake of fish and flesh. They intermarry, only avoiding gotras on both paternal and maternal sides.

Pocock says that there are traces of the settlements of Kashmiris in Greece and from this he infers that the Kashmiri Pandits were originally Greek or Persian settlers in the Valley who were Brahmanised. It is by no means improbable that some Kashmiris went to Persia and Greece in the time of Darius Hystapse's invasion of the Punjab and Alexander's conquest of India (331 B.C.) and settled there. Hence there might be traces of Kashmir in ancient times.

There is a tradition in Maharashtra that white men resembling Kashmiri Brahmins got drifted in a storm on the Malabar Coast and, being supposed to be dead, were, however, found alive when attempted to be cremated. Probably it was a large number of fugitives from Kashmir in the time when Hindus here were being forced to embrace Islam. They might have been quite exhausted and emaciated as if looking dead after their long and tedious journey.

During the Muhammadan rule, some Brahmins were once given option to either submit to the sword or take food prepared by a Musalman. They naturally quivered at the prospect of death and unwillingly accepted the latter alternative, but, in their anguish to reduce pollution to its minimum, made the Musalman cook boil rice in a new lej or earthen pot and when ready they took it out from the lej with their own hands and reluctantly ate it. They afterwards expiated for the forcible pollution by performing Prayashchitta but still the Biradari, who were as punctilious as ever, ostracized them, condemning them for not having preferred death to losing their caste by pollution as thousands others had boldly done under such circumstances.

Their descendents were called Lejibatta because of their ancestors having eaten food cooked by a Muhammadan in a Lej(earthen pot). A stigma also attached to the members of the caste known as Wurud or Purib who were the illegitimate offspring or are of a mixed union in which one of the parents is a Brahmin and the other a Khatri. No Brahmin would take food touched by a Lejibatta, Wurud or Purib.

In the time of Zain-ul-abdin, the Brahmins, who studied Persian and took to government service, were called Karkuns. With the advent of Sikh rule in 1819 A.D, some were called Pandits. Karkuns did not intermarry with Bachabats. Those who are versed in astrology and draw up calendars, cast horoscopes and profess to prophecy future events are called Jotshis. The priests, who preside over Shiva worship, are called Gurins. The Panyechh are those who receive alms and other offerings connected with funeral ceremonies. Their office is regarded as derogatory by the Bachabats as well as the Karkuns who, for this reason, look down on them and refuse to take food from their hands.

IDENTIFICATION BY GOTRA

Among the 199 exogamous sections (gotras), the members of which profess to be descended from the Rishi or inspired Saint whose name the gotra bears are divided into sub-divisions in which, social precedence is governed by the spiritual greatness or the inferiority of the respective Rishis, Koul was considered the highest of all the sub-divisions. But, generally, social position was determined by the nature of occupation followed rather than by the gotra and those who have been employed in superior State service since two or three generations, hold their heads high above, those who are engaged in trade or cultivation.

From the original six gotras, viz., Dhaggatreya, Bharadwaja, Paladeva, Aupamanyava, Maudgalya and Dhaumyayana, by intermarriage and intermixture with other Brahmins, the number of gotras multiplied to 199. According to some authorities, there were only three principal divisions, viz., Bhat, Pandit and Razdan, from which are derived the distinctive appellations of Koul, Sopori, Pandit and Raina. From these three families, as each took to a particular occupation, or by adoption or intermarriage with other gotras, other gotras came into existence.

Besides gotra, each family has a kram or nick-name added to the original name by reason of the head of the family's or any of his ancestor's special calling or because of such peculiar circumstance which has occurred to him. For instance, a man, named Wasdev, had a mulberry tree growing in his count yard and, therefore, he was called Wasdev Tul (mulberry). He, in order to get rid of this nick-name, cut down the tree. Buta mund (trunk) remained and people began to call him Wasdev Mund. He then removed the trunk of the tree but by its removal a khud (depression) was caused and henceforth people called him Wasdev Teng. Thus exasperated, he stopped making further attempt to remove the cause of his nick-name and it continued to be Teng, which is now attached to the names of his descendants.

22

Wedding Bells

Among Hindus all over India the search for a bridegroom for a girl who has attained the age of puberty begins with the matching of horoscopes. Like-minded parents of boys are approached either directly or indirectly by the parents of the girls. If the horoscopes of the girl and the boy match indicating compatibility of the two individuals in terms of adjustability and living in harmony with each other, the stage is set for the next step.

Next, it is the physical appearance and the character that is checked. About 50 years ago, employment was not a criterion for marriage among Kashmiri Pandits because both the boys and the girls were quite often married when they were still in their teens. From the girl's side, the objective was to get a good boy before he blossoms into a useful catch. Most people in the community were poor, yet all adhered to the requirements of custom.

The horoscope details also called the kundalini or the lagna patrika giving details about the location of planets at the time of the birth along with the latitude and longitude of the place of birth is called in Kashmiri **kulawali**.

Today it might seem both comical and funny to the younger generation, but the boy had to be seen by the close relatives of the girl to check him out. Very often, they would contrive a seemingly accidental meet on the street and get a measure of the boy. In many cases, the boy himself would know that he was under observation.

So far as the girl was concerned, the womenfolk would contrive through relatives and neighbours to find out about her beauty and skill in household management.

Once both sides were satisfied, they would go in for an engagement ceremony at which the girl's parents would send appropriate presents like a ring and fruits, etc., which the boy's parents would reciprocate. The date for engagement would of course be decided by priests from both sides. In Kashmiri, the engagement ceremony is called "gandun".

The history of the Kashmiri Pandit Community is linked to the Muslim invasions and the arrival of Islam in mid 14th Century to valley. For nearly 500 years until the short-lived Sikh rule and subsequently the Dogra rule, the Kashmiri Brahmins have been subjected to intense persecution, which forcibly reduced their numbers to just 11 families in the valley. Today's Kashmiri Pandit is the descendant of these 11 families. In fact when Aurangzeb reintroduced Jizya (religious tax imposed on non-Muslims), it was rigorously implemented in Kashmir.

As a result of persecution, many Kashmiri Pandits who could not bear the persecution left Kashmir in the 18th and the 19th Century. Some settled near about in Poonch and others went across to Lahore, Delhi, Agra, Lucknow, Allahabad, Kanpur, Jodpur, Jaipur, and various other places. The generation of national leaders of India comprising Nehru, Katju, Kunzru, Sapru, Kaul, Dhar, etc., are descendants of those who fled Kashmir and

the last phase of driving the original inhabitants of the valley started gradually in 1947 and the last wave was driven out in 1989-90.

Those Kashmiri Pandits who thus migrated rebuilt their lives retaining their cultural and identity in the various places where they settled down. Unfortunately, in their quest for survival and living a life of dignity and self-respect, they lost their language and made use of local customs and merged them with the original Kashmiri traditions.

That is why the engagement ceremony is called “Gandun” is called so by such Kashmiris who stayed on and were part of the 11 families left. Those who migrated during periods of the worst persecution, call the engagement ceremony “Kasamdary”. In fact, in the recent and current folklore, the Kashmiri Pandits from the plains are known as either plain Kashmiri or Purana Kashmiris and the Valley Kashmiris are still known as “Tazu” Kashmiris.

Thus after the religious function, food is usually served by the girl’s side either hot milk and a crisp naan called “takh taech “ or Kahwa which is made from green tea and seasoned with almonds and cardamom and with salted crisp bun “Kulchas”. On the groom’s side, the ladies get together and the eldest aunt (Pof) prepares a special rice pudding, which is salty in taste and is called “var”. It is cooked and seasoned with almonds and a little masala to give it taste. The Pof is given a symbolic cash award called “Zang” and on this occasion Var is distributed among neighbors and relatives.

However, today the scene has totally changed primarily because of two factors namely mobility and education. In the earlier scheme, the mobile part was only the boy. But today with nearly cent percent education for girls, her mobility is taken for granted and so is access.

Now quite often the boy and the girl would have seen each other and talked and perhaps become friendly before the question of marriage arose. In quite a few cases, the boy would tell his mother who would take up the question of approach and further steps. In many communities, the location of the boy and the girl seeing each other has become a small ceremony where the boy and his parents are invited by the parents of the girl.

Janjaghar (Marriage Hall)

By tradition, Kashmiri Pandits have held their weddings in their respective homes or in case the accommodation was not enough, in the house of either a relative or a friend or a neighbour. It was a function in which everybody participated.

Nowadays, as we know, due to displacement, conduct of marriage has become a commercial transaction as professional marriage halls have cropped up and are hired out for rent for the duration of the wedding ceremonies. In most places in India, the words used to describe a marriage hall is Kalyana Mantapa.

But for some strange reason, the Pandits who have migrated mainly to Udhampur, Jammu, and New Delhi use a peculiar word called Janjaghar. The second part of the word namely Ghar one can understand, but the first part is beyond me.

At least six weeks before the actual wedding, the clothes and jewellery had to be organized, which of course would have been collected bit by bit by the girl's mother in the previous five years. For the wedding guests to be fed, a host of items had to be acquired and processed ready for use.

To give an instance, six weeks before my sister got married, I and my brothers had to carry on a cycle two bags of chilies and one bag of turmeric and other masalas. I was very young and terribly scared because the mill (chakki) was on the bank of a stream with a water wheel providing the motive power for grinding and crushing the masala. Unfortunately, this was located next to the cremation ground and my brother and I were frightened. We spent the whole day there and when evening began to come, we hurried through packing the masala quickly and left the place.

Those who had fairly roomy houses and courtyards, would normally organize shamiyanas in their own homes. Those who were not fortunate enough to have adequate space, would celebrate the wedding in a neighbour's house borrowed for the occasion. Carpets and furnishings for the floor had also to be borrowed, most of them from friends, relatives and neighbours.

Apart from this, advance booking had to be made with the butcher, the vegetable vendor, the shamiyana supplier, etc. Because of climatic reasons, Kashmir being very cold, Kashmir Hindus eat meat and fish. However, on religious occasions, meat is not eaten and for weddings only vegetarian fare is allowed.

The bride's father, brothers, and male members have to take leave from their respective jobs for the occasion. Here a word of explanation. In the Hindu ethos, the concept of a modern vacation or holiday does not exist. In ancient times, the only occasion on which the man would leave his home would be to go on a pilgrimage and subsequently the only time one would take leave would be for the marriage of a relative.

The women of the family would go around scouting and enquiring from neighbours, relatives and borrow big enough to cook for the wedding guests. Incidentally, there being no catering services in those days, the entire cook house was built generally in the courtyard on bricks and special provision had to be made for supply of firewood.

All the above preparations were carried on simultaneously with the buildup for the wedding. After a hard day's work, the women folk would get together and sing in praise of the coming wedding. Some relatives and mostly neighbours would come and sing till about midnight. The instrument used for providing the music was and even now is called "Tumbakhnari". It is a cylindrical pipe made of clay, which widens into a round bottom. The bottom is covered by thin leather and when you strike gently with your hand it produces a musical note.

This singing goes on for a week or two, while the tempo builds up for the oncoming wedding, which in the K.P. Community is a five-day affair.

It needs to be added that at the time of the engagement presents are exchanged between the boy's and the girl's families. Usually, the presents that used to be traditionally given included a ring, pheran (the traditional loose fitting gown worn by Kashmiris made of cotton for summer use and woollen for winter use) and a taranga (headgear worn by women now practically extinct) for the bride and a multicoloured generally red and white sacred thread (not to be confused with the sacred thread worn across the chest by the males) called narivan and a bit of bindi (sindoor) in a small container.

The messenger from either side who carried these presents was either a relative or a friend and most often even the servant of the family who might even be a non-Hindu. Both families, during the run up to the wedding, would hold music sessions in the evenings described earlier and the songs sung were called wachuns. Overall the programme of singing was called and is even now called "wanawun".

A word about the bridegroom. Normally, in the traditional scheme of things when families were concentrated in one place only, the boy before attaining puberty would have undergone the thread ceremony. But over a period of time, with families scattered by virtue of employment, the thread ceremony is now done just after maanziraat and devgon ceremonies. This is to fully equip the male for the lagan ceremony.

Among the Kashmiri Pandits, cow dung was extensively used for cleaning and mopping and on the occasion of a wedding in the family, a thorough cleaning was called for. Generally, the ladies of the family would undertake this chore. As part of the preparations for the wedding, professional cooks who traditionally served would come and negotiations would take place for cooking during the wedding. As explained earlier, a mud and brick structure was built in the courtyard on which food for hundreds of guests was prepared. This was called "wur". Usually, somebody from the family, either a close relative or a friend, would be in charge of supervising the cooks. This was considered to be an honour.

Kashmir is perhaps the only place in India where tea is drunk without milk. It is called green tea and the beverage is called "kahwa". This is usually taken in the morning and evening but after lunch a different kind of tea is served which is called "noone or sheer chai". This is salted pink tea generally drunk after a sumptuous lunch. It is believed that this tea is very good for digestion.

The stage is now set for Maanziraat (mehandi raat). This is generally, according to the Purohit's calculations, fixed within 7 days prior to the lagan. The word to describe the selection of an auspicious date for any occasion including weddings is called in Kashmiri "saath".

Maanziraat (mehandi raat)

This is the first major ceremony leading to the wedding and just before it the main door of the houses of the bride and the bridegroom are decorated with natural colours with an Om and swastika. The word Swagatam written in Sanskrit is put on top- and after the introduction of English, the word welcome is also added. The three sides of the doors are also decorated with flowers and other drawings to give it a festive air. This process is called “krool”.

By its very definition, mehandi raat or maanziraat means the night when mehandi is pasted on the hands and the feet of the bride. After a ritual bath in which the women folk of the family help the mas “muchravun” – meaning loosening the bride’s hair for the ritual washing, the maternal aunt of the bride washes her feet and if there is another aunt, elder to the one who washed her feet, she decorates her hands and feet with mehandi. The aunt also distributes mehandi to neighbours and relatives for which she is paid a token sum.

All the ladies are provided with dinner made mostly in mud pots which are kiln-baked and also some from big metal pots called degchis. By now professional cooks would have arrived and on this night started working on a twenty-four hour basis to cater to the needs of the increasing number of relatives who keep pouring in as the temp for the marriage increases.

Throughout the night, there is a music session and in some families professional groups of singers are invited to perform. Some of these are even Muslims who specialize in singing and dancing at marriages. Some of the instruments used are traditional and each member of the orchestra is identified by the instrument that he plays such as Sarangi Player, the Santoor Player, the Rabab Player, the Tumbaknari Player, the Harmonium Player and the Natu Player. The last named is nothing but a hollow mud pot on which either the hand is used or a bunch of keys to produce the required sound.

By now both the bride and the bridegroom in their respective homes get the feeling that they are inching towards the ultimate goal of the wedding. In a way, this is the beginning of the marriage and can be officially said that it has begun.

Devgon

This is the next important step in the run-up to the main ceremony of lagan. Devgon is essentially a havan performed in the respective homes of the bride and the bridegroom. Since Kashmiri Pandits are Shaivites, this havan is dedicated to Lord Shiva and Parvathy. It also signifies the transition of the bride and the bridegroom from the brahmacharya stage to the grahastha ashram stage. Family members participate in it and also observe a fast. On this occasion, some of the clothes jewellery, gold ornaments, which are to be given to the bride, are also placed near the sacred fire.

Now comes the ceremony proper. First the girl or the bride-to-be. A ritual bath begins by pouring a mixture of curd, milk, and rice mixed liberally with water over the bride through a veil held by a group of young girls. This bath is known as “Kanishran”. The rendering of the mantras by the priest (also called Gor) is accompanied by the showering of flowers.

After the bath, the girl is given a new set of clothes, which only a married woman wears. Women in the Kashmir valley did not wear sarees as in the rest of India. Shalwar Kameez was worn by girls until they got married. The main dress for the married women in those days was a pheran. This was a loose gown with very wide sleeve decorated according to the economic status of the people.

Over the years, especially in the past 50 years while the older generation stuck to tradition and continued to wear the pheran, the younger girls as they grew up graduated from the shalwar kameez stage to the sari and today it is rare to find a woman wearing a pheran. Most of them, if at all they wear it, would be in their late sixties or early seventies or even older.

In Hindu society, there is no outward sign to indicate a man’s marital status except for the thread among those who wear it (the unmarried man after his yagnopavit wears the thread comprising three thinner threads, at the time of marriage, it is changed to six smaller threads comprising the entire sacred thread.)

However for the women in most parts of India, it is a necklace also called Thali that is tied around the neck of the bride by the bridegroom in front of the sacred fire, which she wears for the rest of her life. **But for the Kashmiri Pandit women while a necklace is also worn, it is another ornament that signifies that she is married. It is a small or big ornament called “dejihoru”.** It is shaped like an almond with two holes through which a thread is passed and hung from the two ear lobes. This very important ornament is presented to the bride by her mother’s brother. While the bride gets gradually equipped to face her married life, the groom is also presented a new set of clothes comprising the male version of the pheran.

Duribathe

This is again an occasion on the same day when the maternal relatives of the bride and the bridegroom turn up in full force with presents for the bride and groom and are served vegetarian dinner. Why it is called duribathe has its roots in our hoary past when poverty was rampant and day-to-day existence depended on ability to provide rice that which was known as “bathe” in Kashmiri.

The Lagan

This is the final and the most important part of the marriage – an elaborate ritual that remains in the minds of both the bride and bridegroom for the rest of their lives. The actual date and time is fixed by the purohits on both the sides and it can be either during the day during the night depending upon the planetary configuration of stars. Lagan at night is called “rot lagan” and a lagan during the day is called “duhe lagan.”

In most of the states of northern India, the concept and practice of “baraat” has taken root over the century, which however slightly differs from the practice in Southern India. In the North as in Kashmir also, all the relatives of the bridegroom collect at his house prior to their collective departure for the bride’s house where the actual marriage ceremony will take place. The idea is to ceremonially, to the accompaniment of music and singing, send off the bridegroom on the most important task of his life – to bring back home his bride.

For this occasion, traditionally the bridegroom would wear a specially decorated and expensive pheran and with a piece of cloth tied around his waist that was the forerunner of the present day belt. Attached to this belt would be a sword. And the vehicle that would carry the bridegroom to the bride’s house would be a specially decorated horse.

Today many might ask about the horse, which is easily explained. Automobiles were rare and only princes and rich people could afford them. Even today, those who love tradition, still use the horse though they may be able to afford a car. However, the modern generation prefers an automobile and generally most middle class people prefer to hire or borrow a Mercedes Benz or a BMW. Even today the Rolls Royce is reserved for the super rich.

Now the question of sword. Why does the bridegroom carry a sword with him? For the past 800 years or so, one of the greatest fears an individual had was about the security of his women folk. Till the late 19th century, people carried swords and knives for their personal protection. It was but natural that when going ceremonially to bring back his bride, a man should have a weapon with him to ensure protection and security to his wife.

he above is a description of what it was like then. The transition to modern times has changed a few things on the surface but they essentially remain the same. Those, who are a bit traditional, the bridegroom is made to wear a kurta pyjama ,generally white, for sitting during the lagan ceremony before the sacred fire. However, the traditional method of dress among the Kashmiri Pandits was a churidar and achkaan (a long coat which comes down to the knees and a decorated turban).When arriving for the lagan the dress would be acchkan and churidar but when he had to sit before the sacred fire, he would wear a dhoti. However, in recent times a kurta pyjama has also been found acceptable. The Kashmiri Pandits today stick to this dress though some of the more modern ones wear double breast suits with a necktie and the only concession to tradition is the decorated turban.

However, this is only for making a grand entrance into the bride's house – to be dressed elegantly in the traditional mould. Once the baraat reaches the bride's house, the groom has to change into an appropriate dress for the wedding ceremony.

Now let us look at the scene at the groom's house before the baraat departs.

It is a scene of organized anarchy with people running helter skelter and attention being focussed on getting the groom ready for the march of his lifetime to the bride's house. The button has to be properly fixed, the turban has to be tied by an elder and everybody is fussing in preparation for the grand departure.

In the traditional scenario, the turban has a very important place in the marriage ceremony. The groom's eldest paternal uncle will tie the turban on his head and while this is being done, a thali of rice with some money on it, is touched to the left shoulder of the groom as an auspicious sign. When everything is ready, the groom is asked to march towards the door.

Outside in the courtyard a rangoli is drawn by the women folk on which the groom has to stand. By definition, the rangoli is a drawing made by coloured powders which are matchable and what stands out are bright red, green, white and blue. In Kashmiri it is called "vyog". While the groom is standing on the vyog, the eldest woman in the family will take a piece of burfi or sweet and feed it to the groom three times.

When the time comes for the groom to move, a conch shell is sounded. This is called "sheankh shabadh". It is the same sound that one hears from a temple all over India at the time of pooja. Very often small children from the locality would crowd around when a pot with rice and coins is thrown away and children scramble to pick up the coins.

As earlier mentioned, in olden times the groom would ride a horse and the rest of the marriage party would either walk or go in horse drawn carriages or tongas as they were called. Today a flower-bedecked car has replaced the horses and the rest of the baraat follows either in their own cars or in hired cars.

Aside:

Long after the wedding is over and the groom is father of several children, the ladies in the family as also the men would keep repeating among themselves as to how impressive the marriage party or baraat was listing individually the number, the type and the owner of the car and his relationship with the family – close relative, office colleagues, friends, neighbours, etc.

Today, the bridegroom is accompanied by his close relatives in the car and generally some sort of a pilot car will guide the vehicle correctly to the bride's house. When the party arrives at the gate of the bride's house it is announced by blowing the conch. At this point, the bride's parents and elders of the family come out with garlands in their hands to welcome the groom. Here also there is a rangoli type circle or vyog drawn on the ground where the groom steps after having been garlanded. At this point, the bride's

maternal uncle has to carry her out to the place where the groom is standing within the rangoli circle or vyog. This is the first time that the bride stands next to the groom. The eldest among the ladies from the bride's family offers 'nabad' (rock sugar) to the bride and the groom who have to bite the sugar piece three times each. She kisses both the bride and the groom on their foreheads.

With the family priest in attendance, the couple are led to the door of the house where a pooja is conducted. This is called "dwar pooza". This is essentially a worship to welcome the couple through the door to the main mantap where the lagan ceremony will be conducted.

One has to imagine the scene – the bride, the groom, and the close relatives go inside to get ready for the ceremony. The main parties of the baraat or guests are entertained under a big shamiana called "saiban". The first course generally is kawha, green tea without milk and subsequently they are invited to lunch or dinner depending upon the time of the baraat has arrived. It is generally a vegetarian lunch or dinner a blend of the exotic dishes and the humble ones which one eats everyday.

Kashmiri cuisine has become famous the world over for mostly its meat dishes, but for the discrediting expert, there are many dishes which do not use ingredients normally used as a matter of course in the rest of India. For instance, most Kashmiri dishes including non vegetarian, do not use onion, garlic and tomatoes. In fact, there are banned and one is surprised at the taste that such dishes provide even without onion and garlic.

A word about the place of a wedding in the family history. While the grandma will talk about when she was married at the age of thirteen, her daughter will hold forth about her wedding when they had the best illumination ever seen. A listener, also a woman, would hasten to add about the bride's jewellery and perhaps describe her dowry. Not to be outdone another lady member of the discussion group would add dramatically;

'You should have seen how many dishes they had ("suin"), the nadur yakhani was superb, the curd in it was so smooth, and then what about the chok wangun. It just melted in my mouth and I almost swallowed the stem which I should have bitten off.'

"But of course they didn't have as many dishes as they had at Dulari's wedding. They had only fourteen and Rukmani's had nineteen."

These discussions go on endlessly, but they do provide the lore and the gist that makes the marriage an eventful and a memorable occasion.

The Wedding Ceremony:

If it is a lagan fixed during the day, then as the guests finish their lunch and many leave for work leaving their families there, the lagan proper starts. If it is a night lagan the same thing takes place after dinner.

Both the bride and bridegroom are brought and seated before the fire. The bride is in all her finery. The groom is in most cases dressed in traditional kurta and pyjama and kurta or dhoti with his thread over the shirt, ready for use in the numerous rituals, which follow. It starts with rendering of slokas by the priest and often there is more than one priest and sometimes a priest from the boy's side also joins in conducting the marriage.

It is true that three generations back and even today most of what the priests chant is not understood in its original form by the bride and bridegroom. So the Purohit makes it a point to translate the salient points of the slokas in the mother tongue, which in this case is Kashmiri. One of the few but important injunctions given to the couple about to be united in wedlock is their duty towards each other and their families. With their arms crossed over each other and holding hands, which are covered by a cloth, the ceremony proceeds taking the Kashmiri name of "aathwas". It is believed that the next step in this holding of hands is to pull out each others engagement ring and the first to win among the two will play an important role in their married life.

While the left foot of the bride and groom are placed one on top of the other, both are placed on a small platform shaped in a cylindrical form called "kajwat". Before this, a golden thread called "mananlal" is tied around the foreheads of both the bride and the groom. The kajwat ceremony is symbolic. It is a cylindrical stone used to grind and crush masala and other items in the kitchen. The housewife holds the kajwat in her hand while the masala or nuts are kept in a hollow stone cylindrical pot, (wakhul) which is generally round, shaped and using the right hand it is crushed to the desired level. This symbolism here of putting both the feet on the kajwat is explained thus. Physically, it is impossible to balance both feet and even one foot properly on the kajwat. With both feet it is believed that the couple will overcome together any seemingly impossible task.

In most part of India among the Hindus, the most import ritual is tying the dress of the bride and the bridegroom and making them go around the fire seven times. However, in the Kashmiri Pandit weddings, there is a small variation. The first round around the fire is made by both the bride and the groom by stepping on seven one-rupee coins, which are paced in the shape of a circle. The succeeding six rounds are made to the sounds of the chanting of mantras. The bridegroom is instructed by the Purohit to feed some food to the bride who in turn also feeds him. It is a symbolic act and after this they are considered man and wife.

After the above, a tastefully decorated large piece of cloth is put over the heads of both while they are told to hold hands. At this point all the relatives, friends, well-wishers, guests and parents of both the bride and the groom and stand around the sacred fire with their hands full of flowers. The priest is chanting the mantra and at his directions when the right moment comes, all shower the flowers over the bedecked couple. This is called "posha pooza".

Vidai Ceremony:

It is now time for the newly married couple to go home. This time both the bride and the bridegroom are ceremonially led to another freshly made vyog (the circular decorated design on the ground). At this time, the bride usually cries, as she is leaving her parent's home to start her new life with her husband. As they stand on the vyog together the eldest woman in the bride's family comes out and feeds a piece of burfi three times to both, symbolizing the fact that they are now a couple. Two rice pots with money are kept in front of the couple and after they leave it is given in charity.

In the old traditional style, the bride would be seated in a decorated palanquin and carried to the groom's house. However, in modern times both of them go in a decorated car. It is usually a cavalcade, which is now smaller than the one, which arrived from the groom's, house. Depending upon the practices and beliefs in the groom's family, the party sometimes goes to a temple of their deity to be blessed or comes straight home where they are received by members of the groom's family led by his mother and aunts.

In Kashmir, we have a little ceremony just before the bride enters her in-law's house. All over India, it is called Dwarpuja and some mantras are chanted at this point. However, in Kashmir the groom's aunt on the father's side will generally close the door from inside and when the groom knocks, she demands money before she opens the door. This is of course done amidst merriment because she will sometimes demand more and the groom will have to borrow from others, to pay her so that she opens the door.

After the Wedding: It is not over yet

Satraat:

After making the inaugural visit to her new home, the bride accompanied by her husband is invited by her parents for dinner. Both are presented at this time with new clothes, which they have to wear before leaving the house. Depending upon the status of the two families, either a Pashmina shawl or equivalent cloth is presented along with salt and cash. This presentation is known as "aathgath". It is generally given to the bride.

The name of the ceremony satraat requires an explanation. In the old days, at this time, the parents of the bride would present her some cooking vessels and cutlery to carry to her new home. It has been a tradition among the older generation while discussing weddings to talk about the quantity and the quality of the vessels presented at the time of satraat.

Phirlath/ Phirsaal:

Now that the wedding is over and the daughter is a married woman the father-in-law invites the son-in-law to dinner. Most of the close relatives would attend this and apart from presenting the groom with a dress and the bride with a saree and even some gold, the occasion is more social than religious. It is a sort of thanksgiving and normalizing of relationship by putting it on a cordial even keel.

Roth Khabar:

Sugar has had a fascination for the Kashmiri Pandits. Perhaps like other communities. Roth is a sweet cake, dried mixed with nuts. This is easily baked by bakers from the Kashminri Pandit community. In other words, in a small city like Srinagar practically every locality had its own baker and most of the products like kulcha, chot, taelwor, takhtech, roth are all variations of bakery products going from the cheapest like the kulcha to the most expensive like the roth. On a Saturday or Tuesday, generally the bride's parents send big cakes of roth along with nabad (rock sugar shaped like a fruit – apple). The groom's family receives it in the traditional way and distributes them among relatives, friends, and neighbours.

On this occasion, it is the bride's younger brother generally who takes back to her parent's house. Once there, she is given some salt and cash for her return to her in-law's house. This is known as "shagoon".

And so the saga of wedding is over and the journey of life begins for two young people, the nucleus of the future family. In the celestial reckoning, it is the beginning of the mid point of life. The Vishnu Avatara in charge of life on this earth presides over it and the karma yogi plods on, surges ahead and eventually finds his objective in life.

Whoever invented the device called marriage had thought out very well the intricacies of life and a foolproof method of preserving the family as a unit and a part of the never-ending chain called life and civilization. Collectively, some call it mankind's folly, BUT WHAT A SWEET FOLLY.

When a marriage or yeguopavit Ceremony took place in a family in the past the relatives and the friends etc., used to pay some amount of money according to their capacity this would help the family defray some expenses. This was called Gulimyoth. Now even the gifts offered are called Gulimyoth.

Attagat:

Whenever a girl was married, she carried some amount of money to her in laws and pays it to her mother in law or the eldest lady in her husband's house. This is repeated in all trips made by the bride to her in laws house at least during the first year of her marriage. This money is called Attagat. In the days of yore, there used to be a formula to regulate

this amount according to the status of the two families concerned. This formula was called Taith.

We have described the sequence of the marriage ceremony when the field of operations was rather limited according to modern standards- within the seven bridges.

Gone are the mainzimyor (the traditional marriage broker), the traditional exchanges, the din and bustle of the wur where food was prepared, the easy accessibility of everyone. Remember, everyone and every place was within walking distance. Do not forget the chelli chez of the Batta Khandar.

Times change, people change, distances increase, TIME DECREASES. Four lakhs of us are wandering now (2002) since 13 years. How long more? Will we be like the 12 lost tribes of Israel? Only time will tell.

Meanwhile, the traditional marriage broker has disappeared due to the problem of distance to be replaced by a competitor- the matrimonial column of the newspapers

Community has started using the INTERNET matrimonial columns. After all, we have to move with the times.

From Bride To Bahu

“Aye maharin, baneye nosh” (came the bride, became the daughter-in-law)

Today, marriages have become instant and divorces are not very slow either. But in the years of the yore, marriage was a serious matter and it was the cementing force for linking families, developing relations and bettering society.

A look at how things were done among the Pandits, which will give you an idea of the sanctity of marriage and the integration of the bride into the family. It is the misfortune of the girl child in India even today that the day she is born she is looked upon as a guest who will move to some other house. While this was recognized earlier, her induction into her new home was sought to be gradual, painless and smooth.

Two generations back, if you would have gone to a Pandit's house, which had recently celebrated their son's marriage, you would most likely find in one corner of the living room a young lady attired in good clothes with the pulloo over her forehead. If you had asked the lady of the house as to why she was sitting in one corner she would have smilingly explained it as follows.

“She needs time, we are all strangers to her, true she has married my son, but I want to gradually give her time to get familiar with others in the family so that she is able to identify her close relatives and know them. When I was a bride, it used to take about three months for people like me to leave that corner and get on with the job of running

the home. Now it takes lesser time. It is true she is my daughter-in-law. But remember my daughter is also someone else's daughter-in-law."

Of course, times have changed now and so have the values. Today, education is a must for girls and more than half of them are today professionals themselves. But may we have a small postscript here.

Normally, newlyweds, according to the latest western culture, that has now become a part of the middle class routine, go for a honeymoon whatever that means. And if you ask a seventy-year-old woman from the Pandit community she will tell you "We used to be allotted our own room for privacy after several months after we were married." This in fact, was a small though not much publicized ceremony or event within the family.

Matrimony- Vivaha Sanskar

KHANDAR/ NAETHER	Wedding/Marriage
Yemen ha chu khandar	They are having a wedding
Kamis chu naether?	Who is getting married
Nechvis chukh naether	The son is getting married
Koree chukh naether	The daughter is getting married

23

FESTIVALS

1. Shiva Ratri or Herat – 13th day of dark fortnight of Phagan:

This festival commences from the 1st day of dark fortnight of Phagan. From the 5th to 9th day house cleaning is done by leaping and washing. On the 10th day money according to tat scale is sent to the daughters in their husband's houses. On the 11th fried fish and bread are sent to the daughters. On the 13th day the head of the family keeps fast and performs the puja of Shiva at night. The 14th day is the feast day. The elders are given small presents of sugar or fruits by the younger and cooked rice and meat are sent to the daughters. On the 15th day or the 1st day of the succeeding fortnight walnuts consecrated at the puja are distributed among relations and friends.

2. Tila Ashtami - 8th day of bright fortnight of Phagan

3. Chetar Choudas – 14th day of dark fortnight of Chet.

4. Sont – 1st Chekt (Sankriat):

A basket of unhooked rice, with a bread, a rupee, a pen-case, a cup of curds, a few walnuts, a crumb of cooked rice and some flowers, are kept overnight and seen the first thing in the morning by the inmates of the house just on opening their eyes from sleep. Each picks up one or two walnuts, which are dropped in the river after bathing.

5. Nauaresh Mavas – 15th day of dark fortnight of Chet:

A fair is held at Vechar Nag, a northern suburb of Srinagar

6. Naw Warith 1st day of bright fortnight of Chet:

The custom of uncooked rice, etc., being seen in the morning as on the sont(spring) is observed. The sons-in-law are invited and given a feast. On their return to their houses they are given money presents.

7. Baisakhi – 1st Baisak (Sankrat):

A fair is held at Gupta Ganga near the Nishat Bagh.

8. Durga Ashtami – 8th day of bright fortnight of chet:

A fair is held at Khir Bhawani (Tula Mulah).

9. Ram Nawami – 9th day of bright fortnight of Chet:

Fair is held at Hari Parbat, and at Raghu Nath Temple.

10. Yag Ram Nawami - 10th day of bright fortnight of Chet:

A fair held at Hari Parbat, and at Raghu Nath Temple.

11. Shri Panchami – 5th day of dark fortnight of Baisakh:

This day is sacred to the goddess Sarawati (Minerva).

12. Shraddha of Rishi Pir – 6th day of dark fortnight of Baisakh:

A fair is held at the shrine of Rishi Pir at Batayar.

13. Vetala Shastri – 6th day of dark fortnight of Baisakh:

A fair is held at the different shrines of vetals in Srinagar.

14. Munda Dashmi – 10th day of dark fortnight of Baisakh:

A fair is held at the mound near the Dal Darwaza.

15. Achhen Trai – 3rd day of bright fortnight of Baisakh

A fair is held at Kother, a village in Tehsil Anantnag.

16. Ganesh Choudas – 14th day of bright fortnight of Baisakh

A fair is held at the Ganesh Ghat in Srinagar

17. Jeth Ashtami – 8th day of bright fortnight of Jeth:

A fair is held at Khir Bhawani

18. Nirjala Ika Dashi – 11th day of bright fortnight of Jeth:

A fair is held at Dud Ganga.

19. Hara Saptami – 7th day of bright Fortnight of Har:

Circles with lime and colours are made on the floor in the house in resemblance of the sun.

20. Hara Ashtami – 8th day of bright fortnight of Har:

A fair is held at Khir Bhawani.

21. Hara Nawami – 9th day of bright fortnight of Har:

A fair is held at Hari Parbat

22. Mela Jvala Bhagawati – 14th day of bright fortnight of Har:

A fair is held at Khrew.

23. Biyas Puja – 15th day of bright Fortnight of Har:

24. Rakhri – Full –moon-day of Sawan :

Shiva puja is done in every house by the head of the family and a fair is held at Amar Nath, Mahadeva, Harsheshwara and Shankracharya.

25. Chandan Shasti – 6th day of dark fortnight of Bhadun

A fast is kept by women which is broken at the time the moon rises.

26. Janam Astami (Birthday of Sri Krishna) – 8th day of dark fortnight of Bhadun:

A fast is kept which is broken at the time the moon rises by taking only Fruits.

27. Vinayaka Chaturthi – 4th day of bright fortnight of Bhadun:

A fair is held at all the shrines of Ganesh.

28. Ganga Ashtami or Radha Ashtami - 8th day of bright fortnight of Bhadun:

A fair is held at Harmukata Ganga where ashes of those who have died during the past twelve months are carried and thrown into the lake there after performing the shraddha. Another fair is held at Ganga Jatan (Pratapsinghpura) where a bath is taken by the pilgrims in the water oozing out from a precipice there. In leap years the fairs are not held Harmukata Ganga and Ganga Jatan but at Sharda and then it is called Sharda Ashtmi.

29. Pan – Any auspicious day during the bright fortnight of Bhadun:

Bread are prepared and distributed among the relations and friends.

30. Indar Bah – 12th day of bright fortnight of Bhadun:

A fair is held at Kanimaji near Baramulla.

31. Vitha Truvah – 13th day of bright fortnight of Bhadun:

Birthday of river Jhelum.

32. Anant Choudas – 14th day of bright fortnight of Bhadun:

A new armlet of gold or thread is worn – by a male on his right arm and by a female in her left ear.

33. Kanyagat or Kambari Pachh – Dark fortnight of Assuj:

This fortnight is entirely devoted to the Shraddha or offerings to the manes of the pitris. It is a series of offerings and feasts in honour of the dead. The day (Tithi) on which one dies is represented in this fortnight by one corresponding to it for the performance of his or her Shraddha.

34. Nava –Ratra – 1st day of bright fortnight of Assuj:

35. Durga Ashtami – 8th day of bright fortnight of Assuj and of Chet:

A fair is held at Khir Bhawani.

36. Maha Nawami – 9th day of bright fortnight of Assuj and of Chet:

A fair is held at Hari Parbat.

37. Dasehra of Vizai Dashmi - 10th day of bright fortnight of Assuj this

This day is celebrated with great pomp. The weapons and instruments of war are hallowed and then a campaign is opened. Three immense figures, stuffed, with gunpowder, are made to represent Ravana, Kumbakarana and Meghanada and these are placed at the proper time in the center of a large open space without the city. To represent Rama, Sita and Lakshman, three little boys are splendidly dressed and carried in a palanquin to the same place. Crowds of people gather there and Maharaja sends all the troops with the guns, etc. At a given signal one of the little boys, who is supposed to be Rama, taps forth from the palanquin attended by the two other little boys and fires a small arrow at the big figure representing Ravana, while the other discharge there arrows against the other two figures. Of course at this moment the three monsters, Ravana, Kumbakarna and Meghanada explode with a tremendous noise and then the guns rattle and the cannon roar and the people shout and eventually retire.

38. Devali – 15th day of dark fortnight of katak:

Oil lamps are lighted in the evening in honour of Goddess Lakshmi.

39. Annakuta – 1st day of bright fortnight of Katak:

Rice is distributed among the poor and the officials are given sweetmeats by the State after puja is performed at the Basant Baagh.

40. Gopal Ashtami – 8th day of bright fortnight of katak:

41. Birthday of Kali – 8th day of dark fortnight of poh:

A fair is held at Kali's shrine above Zaina Kadal.

42. Khetsri Mavas – 15th day of dark fortnight of Poh:

In the evening Khichri is cooked and a plateful is kept outside the house in the compound for God Kuvera.

43. Shishira Sankranti – 1st of Magh (Sankrat):

Kangris with live charcoals and also rice ghee and salt and cash are given to the priests in the name of the dead.

44. Gauri Tritiya – 3rd day of bright fortnight of Magh:

This day is celebrated in honour of Goddess Saraswati. The priest writes hymns of the Goddess on elaborately illumined paper, which he gives to youngsters. He is given presents of money in return.

45. Shruka Tsoram – 4th day of bright fortnight of Magh:

On this day the priest rites down a shloka in Sanskrit, which he gives to the young boys with benedictions.

46. Bhishma Ashtami – 8th day of bright fortnight of Magh

A fast is kept in honour of Bhishma Pitamaha, this day being the anniversary of his death.

47. Bhimsen Edadashi – 11th day of bright fortnight of Magh

A fast is kept this (See Maharata Shanti Parb)

48. Shiva Chatur dashi – 14th day of bright fortnight of Magh

A fast is kept this day and Shiva's puja is performed.

49. Sokmavati – Monday on which Amavasya falls

It is observed as a fast. People bathe this day in the river at the Somayar chat on the right bank of the river just near the 2nd bridge at Srinagar, this **spot in the Jhelum being sacred to the moon.**

The Kashmiri Pandit, Anand Koul, 1924.

Pun Deun

“We have a popular history and a folktale about the celebration of the famous festival of Venayak Chorum by the Kashmiri Pandit community, which is also called Pun Deun. Literally, the word pun means thread, but what connection it has with the festival only scholars can tell.

“This is a traditional celebration which almost all Kashmiri Pandit families celebrate in Bhadon (August/September) by preparing very delicious Roths of wheat pan-cakes fried in ghee. Some people consider it as a celebration of Lord Hanuman's day. People in South India celebrate this day as Ganesh Puja.

“This will remind our community, especially our youth, how we used to maintain the social links with each other by distributing the Naveed (prasad) of this function in the form of Roth to all our neighbours, relatives and even strangers. This allowed us to keep in close touch with each other. This day is celebrated with devotion, to show respect to Almighty God. The celebration also gives enjoyment in the form of a get together for the family, especially among children. For this celebration, the big family kitchen and all the brass utensils are cleaned thoroughly.

“Although religious significance of this day may have numerous interpretations, it has the same importance as any of our other festivals such as Shiva Ratri (Herath), Janamashtami etc., and it was always on top of the list, especially for the womenfolk. All of us were very keen to get this Naveed. As I remember, all our neighbours, relatives and friends were very keen to get it and if by mistake or otherwise it was not delivered on time, the persons would lodge a complaint and one had to apologize. Even the relatives in far off villages expected this Pun Naveed. In some cases, the Naveed was delivered up to one month after the celebration. The Roth fried in ghee would stay fresh for a long time. I remember when my children were grown up and had been away from home for higher education, they always expected the Pun Roth when they returned home for vacation.

“ In our home at Srinagar, my mother, and later my wife, used to perform and celebrate this festival with great devotion and faith. Some people also called Pun Deun as Beeb gharas maji hund doh. They would clean the clay floor and walls of the room (usually the Kani or top floor of the house) when the celebration was to be performed. Some would use their kitchen. All brass utensils were cleaned with sand to shine them, and then they were washed with clay to sanitize cleaned and used to fry the Roth. This utensil was especially meant for this day and was not used for other purposes.

“The following ingredients were collected several days in advance for this occasion:

For Roth, white flour, brown sugar, ghee (butter), salt, vegetable oil, yoghurt (zamat dodh), Khashkhash (sesame seed), cardamom (big alaiche seed). For puja flowers, rice, barley, green grass (dramun), some fruits, fresh walnut, silver foil (ropeh warukh), nariwan (coloured string) and Sindoor. In the interior, it was usually difficult to find Dramun, which could be only found in the pastures outside the city or from the garden of a prosperous relative.

“In combined families, the senior lady of the house, who usually performed this celebration, used to get some cotton thread hand spun by an unmarried girl and all kinds of vegetables of the season. About five paw (1 kg) of wheat flour was kept in a separate Thali (brass plate) with 5 chhatang (nearly 300 gram) of brown sugar. This was meant as offering to the God for whom this festival was to be celebrated. Separately, additional 250 grams of wheat flour per person in the family was weighed and used for cooking Roth. The proportion of brown sugar to flour was one chhatang (65 grams) of sugar for 250 grams of flour.

“My family prepared the Roth in the following manner: the required quantity of brown sugar, according to the quantity of wheat flour, was boiled in a bhogun (brass pot) with a small quantity of water big alaichi seed (Big Cardamom) was mixed with the wheat flour.

Then the brown sugar water was mixed with flour. To make it into dough, some ghee was also mixed to make the flour soft and sweet. The dough was divided into sizeable and each portion was rolled flat using a chakla and belan (rolling pin). Then this bread was put on the flat of a Thali's (bronze plate) backside and made smooth. Some designs were made on the flat end of bread using fingers or with the bottom of a Khos (bronze cup). Sufficient quantity of ghee was then placed in the karai (wok) on a stove to fry the Roth. Then yoghurt was mixed with Khashkhash (sesame) seeds and pasted smoothly on the flat end of the Roth. Then the bread was put in the hot ghee to fry.”

Amar Nath Bhan, Koshur Samachar, Sept. 2000

24

Fragrance & Nostalgia

Delicacies

While every scholar dwells strongly on the inherent unity of India amidst the seeming diversity on the surface, nowhere is it more evident than in the food habits of the Hindus. Delicacies are quite well known but everybody cannot afford them. In the South, for instance, you have a minimum three-course meal but the poor sections of society cannot afford all the items on the menu on a daily basis.

Thus, in South India majority take rice and sambhar, which is for the North Indian something like Dhal with a specific different masala and sometime a few vegetables like drumstick or brinjal or tomato thrown in for taste and variety. Comparatively speaking, in the north it is Chapathi and Dhal. In the same vein, majority of the people in the Kashmir valley have reduced the poor man's menu to simply rice and hak. To clarify. Hak is a green leafy vegetable and its nearest cousin in the rest of North India is called Sag. It is rich in iron and with minimum masala, it provides the light gravy to mix with rice that can be eaten.

All of us know that Kashmiri non-vegetarian dishes like rogan josh or yekhni are quite famous, but so are the vegetarian dishes. Among these are Nadru and special good quality hak. One of the nostalgic memories for every Pandit today, who has been banished from the valley, is the hustle and bustle of the nadru sellers at Haba Kadal in the early hours of the morning.

It may be explained here that in the city of Srinagar the Haba Kadal area almost right up to Fateh Kadal was the only place in the city where there was a small concentration of pandits. This being so and most of them being service men, they used to congregate on the small traffic circle which for a while in the morning would become like a mini vegetable market.

Nadru is a water grown vegetable and at first glance looks like a miniature bamboo stick. However, after it is boiled and cooked it, becomes soft and slightly crunchy and with the right masala very tasty once it is cooked in curds. Quite a lot of nadrus are grown on the Dal Lake and from that comes the local saying "Dalik nadir". It is a famous delicacy and most families would ensure that they buy this particular variety of nadru if guests were expected at home.

Similarly in the whole of Srinagar city, while hak was grown almost everywhere, the one from one locality namely Kawdar was the most famous as it was considered very tasty. Kawdar is in fact a small locality near Ali Kadal.

Talk of such things to a Pandit on the North pole or in the New York or London or Timbuktu or Yokohama you will get the reaction that spells just one word "Nostalgia"

The smells of a Bazaar are its identifying marks and when one gets used to the smells and fragrance of the place one longs for it. That is outside the house. Inside the house it is heaven. Heavenly fragrance of delectable masala that triggers the taste buds, and is today world famous served on very expensive plates in five star hotels in India and abroad.

The names are magical. You mention them and it brings a smile on the face of a Kashmiri. Each name has a story to tell. Begin with teatime.

The whole of India has practically converted to Western systems of using foreign origin brands like Lipton, Brooke Bond, Tata etc., The liquid is mixed with milk and sugar, but in our Kashmiri Valley we use Green tea totally different from machine processed tea. No milk, we are adults and yes, a spoon of sugar. Of course, it is called Kahewa and in the colloquial it is also referred to as Mogil Chai.

The beautiful aroma is accompanied by a lovely Kulcha or a Chot. The first one is from the local baker and is hard on the tooth whereas the second offering of the baker is soft. In any case, the two make a good combination for a native breakfast.

After a heavy lunch, the ingredients of which will soon appear before you, you are satisfied but you do feel a little heavy. That is just the time to have a Sheer Chai for which the tea is different and milk is added but instead of sugar salt is added. Why? Because Namkeen (Salty) is good for digestion.

By the time you come home or go to a relative's house, dinner or lunch is getting ready. How do you know? By the fragrance, by the smell, by the aroma. Think of Marziwangun, and what comes before mind's eye? Rogan Josh and Chok Wangun (Sour Brinjal) Remember.

Sounf and Shount (Ginger) they accompany most of the main masalas and are the catalytic agents (think of your chemistry) for producing the flavour. Who can ever forget leddar (Haldi – Turmeric) think of the combination of wangun and olav (Brinjal and Potato). Do not forget Haldi also goes into Ale Wangun (Kadu and Brinjal). Hey, what about Gogij (Shal gam) and the lovely Nadru.

It is late afternoon and teatime. What shall we have? Of course, Kahewa we do need to have something with it. Something Namkeen how about some Warimuth in the rest of India it is also called mixture or chow chow, but the youngsters have a sweet tooth. So let us give them a Takhtech (Sweet Bread slightly hard).

It is winter and the Pandit is sitting with his pheran on and if he is an old grandfather with a turban on his head and if he is a father, with a cap on his head. Tucked under his Pheran, is the priceless Kangri. And then the following dialogue:

Pandit is gazing out of the window as the snowflakes fall on the leaves of the almost bare, Mulberry tree, which has a lone mynah, perched on a branch next to its net.

The lady of the house comes in:

“Bathi kheyew pate gachewe yakh.” (Have your food, later it will get cold)

And so the food is laid on the ground where already a chadar has been put. Let us sneak a look at the menu.

Remember it is winter. No fresh vegetables available. No hak, no monje (Nol Kol) Therefore some dried vegetables. Wangun Hachi, a little bit of Tamatar Hachi (dried Brinjal and dried Tomato). For a little variation Al (Kadu). Also a bit of dried fruit called Bumschunt (dried Apple). In a little katori, Rajmah with its own juice.

Now imagine all this neatly placed on a piping hot plate, thali of rice in front of you. Even as you read this, your mouth will water.

Of course, all this is vegetarian. How about some neni/gadi bathe. Though meat is available in winter also, it is the dried fish that is quite often eaten. Hogade (dried fish) is the name.

Dreaming in winter is quite common. Dream of dun (Walnuts), Badam (Almond), Nabad (Rock sugar)- what do they remind you of? Spring, of course, Badamwari, when the almond trees start flowering. We do get nostalgic about summer and certainly, spring before that.

And that's brings us to the festival Shivarathri. What about vatuk (the earthen pot which is consecrated for the puja). And then your stock of Dun (Walnuts). You need them for Shivarathri. Dream a little further: wedding in summer – Ataharu, (a string with which is attached a gold ornament which is passed through the pierced ear lobe of the women on both sides). This is worn traditionally by married women only. Both ornaments dangling from the two ears together are known as Dejihoru.

Speaking of weddings, what about buying a tumbakhnari (an earthen cylinder which opens out into a rounded pot open at the bottom that is covered by thin leather and produces musical sound when taken into the lap and played with the fingers of the two hands).

One should end on this note but remember there is the expensive side of Rogan Josh (meat with chilly masala) yekhni (meat with curd mixture which is also utilized when nadru is separately prepared.). Add to that the beautiful much (mince meat cooked in chilly masala and given the shape of a small cutlet with thick gravy).

All these are expensive items. We know it. You know it. We can't afford it every day. So let us not forget our old friend Hak which is our daily companion with rice. As you enter home, the fragrance of heng (Hing – Asafoetida) comes sailing through the air. And you know friend hak is there.

Food is superb, memories are fine, and they keep us alive.

Wolse salas gachav

(Come; let us go for a feast)

25

Sikh-Pandit Ties

Guru Teg Bahadur's Martyrdom, 1675

Iftikhar Khan, alias Afghan-I-sher, was appointed as governor of Kashmir in 1674 A.D. the following is briefly the account recorded in GURMUKHI in the Guru Khalsa Twarikh, by Bhai Gyan Singh Gyani, in its Part III, page 1354, and also in the same language in the Suraj Prakash by Bhai Santosh Singh Gyani (in the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh).

“Under the commands of Aurangzeb, Itikhar Khan was using torture towards the Pandits in Kashmir, and was forcibly converting them to Islam. He also used to seize pretty Panditani girls and make them over as gifts to the Musalmans for their harems. Some pious men among the Pandits then met and decided to go to Amar Nath and invoke mercy of Shiva there for deliverance from the tyrannies of this bigot. At the Amar Nath cave one of the Pandits saw Shiva in a dream who told him to go to Teg Bahadur, the Ninth Sikh Guru, in the Punjab and ask for his help to save the Hindu religion. He spoke to his companions about this revelation.””

Then they returned, and about 500 Pandits collected and proceeded to Amrithsar and thence to Anandpur where Guru Teg Bahadur was living. They told him about the terrible atrocities committed on them by Aurangzeb's governor, Iftikhar Khan, in Kashmir. The guru was deeply touched on hearing the details, and was in a sorry and pensive mood. At that time his son, Guru Govind Singh, who was then a child of nine years of age and was playing outside, came to him.

He saw a crowd of Pandits sitting there in distress and his father mute as a fish. He asked his father what he was contemplating. Guru Teg Bahadur, pointing towards the Pandits, told his son mournfully that these Hindus were being forced to renounce their religion and that, he thought, they could be protected if some holy man offered himself to be sacrificed for them. Guru Govind Singh, with folded hands, said to him – “Father, who else is a holier man, fit for being sacrificed than yourself for saving the Hindu religion? It is, you know, the foremost duty of a Kshatriya to give his head for rescuing the cow and the Brahmin.” Guru Teg Bahadur told him – I have absolutely no hesitation in giving my head but I am grieving that, as you are a child of nine years only, who would take your care after me.” Guru Govind Singh replied, earnestly, “Almighty God would take my care.”

Guru Teg Bahadur was pleased to hear this courageous answer from his worthy son and then advised the crowd of the Pandits to go to Aurangzeb and tell him straight way that they, together with all the Brahmins in Kashmir, were quite ready to embrace Islam if Teg Bahadur, who was the chief Guru of the Hindus, would first be converted.

The Pandits went to Nawab Zalim Khan, the then governor of Lahore, and presented to him their petition, which had been dictated by Guru Teg Bahadur. The governor gladly endorsed it and gave it back to the Pandits for presenting it to the Emperor at Delhi. He gave them all necessary help for reaching that place safely. They went and presented the petition, and he thought that the mere conversion of one man would automatically accomplish his wicked design. He called the Qazies and Moulvies in a Durbar and joyfully of course, they all received the tidings with acclamation. He told the Pandits that he cheerfully accepted the condition lay. He sent them back to Kashmir, making suitable arrangements for their return journey. He wrote to Iftikhar Khan, governor of Kashmir, to desist from forcible proselitising for, he said, he was now satisfied that no more force was needed for attaining the object in view.

Aurangzeb sent a letter by an official to Guru Teg Bahadur at Anandpur, inviting him to come to Delhi. Before the imperial Officer reached him, the Guru, accompanied by five attendants, started for Agra on 11th Har 1732 (24th June 1675 A.D.) He had an interview with the Emperor. The latter pressingly solicited to him to embrace Islam. The Guru had words with him, roaring emphatically that he spurned the idea. The emperor, thereupon, being off the hooks, wrinkled his brows and ferociously ordered the executioner to take the Guru to a place to be beheaded there. While being taken to be put to death, the Guru quietly told one of his five disciples, he should take away his head to Guru Govind Singh. On 13th, Maghar 1732 (27th November 1675 A.D.) Guru Teg Bahadur was beheaded.

Bhai Jita stealthily took away his head. He cut and ran. When he neared Anandpur, Guru Govind Singh went forth to meet him and bowing reverently, received his father's head. In the turban bound round the head, was found a paper with the following ennobling words written thereon Sar-I-khud dadam magar sir-I-khuda na dadam, meaning that he had given his head but not God's secret (i.e. religion). The head, which wore the glorious crown of martyrdom, was duly cremated.

Guru Govind Singh, being intensely grieved at the ferocity of Aurangzeb in killing his innocent father, took a solemn vow to avenge his death by taking to arms and embarking on a crusade to free the country from the Muslims.” **(An extract form Kashmiri Pandit by Pt. Anand Koul-1924)**

Our respectful homage to the Great Guru. May his grace inspire us to stand united for the struggle to return to our homeland in honour and dignity.

Pandits' Thanksgiving at Anandpur, 1995

More than 2,000 Kashmiri Pandits from India and abroad participated in the kritagayata yatra from Chandigarh to Anandpur Sahib on April 16, re-enacting the 320 years old journey undertaken by Brahmins from Kashmir to seek the help of Guru Tegh Bahadur in stopping the genocide perpetrated on them by mughal emperor Aurangzeb.

The yatra was led by Dr.Agnishekhar,President of Panun Kashmir,who said that. systematic genocide was being committed against Kashmiri Pandits by forces within and outside India necessitating the blessings of the Guru again in order to “halt the onslaught of destructive forces of religious fanaticism”.

Before proceeding to Anandpur Sahib, the pilgrims paid homage to Pandit Krirpa Ram Dutt, the leader of the 500 strong Kashmiri Pandit delegation, which had sought help from the Guru to save their religion, at Chamkaur Sahib.

The pilgrims formally presented ardass at Takht Kesgarh Sahib there. Besides this they washed the corridor leading to the sanctum sanctorum of the gurdwara with water brought from the Vitasta river in Kashmir . They also installed a shilalekh of their ardass to the guru there, it added.

(Chandigarh, April 12, 1995, Asian Age)

26

The Kabailies Are Coming

The marauders, the raiders, had come. They were at Shalteng. Some had reached the outskirts of Damodar Vudar (the Air Strip) . Two days earlier, the entire valley was plunged into darkness as the Kabailies had destroyed the Muharra power house , the only source of electric light to the valley.

There was fear all round. No one knew what would happen. To the ears of a seven year old, it sounded strange. Who were these Kabailies? Why were they coming? Were they going to kill us? It was eerie in the dark to hear shots and gunfire coming from the outskirts of the city. Winter was already approaching and it was cold. The menfolk asked the women to dress up the children in warm clothes for instant departure. Accordingly, I found myself being dressed in three shirts and three sweaters and one coat and over it my pheran. Actually, no one knew where we could have gone. Transport was nonexistent and there was no Government or law worth the name.

The atmosphere was so terrifying that even we children, who could not know what was happening, were affected to such an extent that we could not eat our dinner properly. The faces of the elders were lined with worry .

It was the evening of October 26th 1947. Unknown to us, the Maharajah of Kashmir had signed the instrument of accession to become a part of India. That was a night hardly anybody slept. The next morning, the news spread like wild fire and by 10. A.M. the first wave of the Indian army landed in Srinagar.

The rest is history.

A first person account – that is a scene described by person who was present and understood what was going on is the most credible explanation of an event.

Let Professor Som Nath Dhar tell us about those terrible days in his own words:

When Kashmir Was Almost Lost

“Though hard-boiled leaders like Acharya Kripalani had warned Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir about the impending Pakistani invasion, his Raj Guru had assured him that it was ordained for him to become a great King who would rule over large parts of India and Pakistan. Living in a world of illusions, the Maharaja was having his usual Dussera Durbar on the night of Oct.25, 1947, when the Pakistan invaders were just miles away from Srinagar. It was when lights went off during the ceremonies, as a result of capture of Mahura power station by invaders that the grim reality of the situation dawned on the Durbar!

I joined the news Service Division of All India Radio on September 19, 1947. Within about a month, the Pakistani invasion of Kashmir exploded on the horizon with a big bang. One evening in late October, my brother-in-law, Mr.K.N.Bamzai invited me to go to the house of D.N.Kachru, the Political Assistant attached to the Prime Minister Nehru. He lived on the premises of 17, York Road, Panditji's residence.

A small group of young Kashmiri boys had gathered at Kachru's house to hear the eyewitness account of the Kabailie invasion of Kashmir as given by Mr.J.N.Dhar, a former Air Force pilot. At that time, he was working with the Director General of Civil Aviation. He had just returned after flying a couple of reconnaissance sorties over the Kashmir Valley. What he told us was grim and terrifying. He had seen the road from Kohalla to Baramulla full of Kabailies, who were moving by vehicular transport towards Srinagar. Baramulla was in flames, so were many other small villages and hamlets overrun by the invaders. Another group of Kabailies was sighted by him going towards the Manasbal lake, in an effort to outflank armed resistance in Srinagar. The third group was marching towards the Damodar village where Srinagar Airport was situated.

The only communication link between Delhi and Srinagar was a weak radio set functioning at the airport, which was a little more than an airstrip primarily built to enable the Maharaja to land his private plane. While listening to Mr.Dhar, it seemed that the situation back home was bad and if Indian troops were not inducted immediately, the fate of the Valley was sealed. He told us if the airport was lost, nothing could be done. This naturally sent shivers down our spine. All of us had our near and dear ones in the Valley and after the experience of Punjab, one was terribly worried about the outcome in Kashmir Valley. The problem was how to get the Government of India to agree to commit Indian troops in Kashmir.

Standstill Agreement

The Jammu and Kashmir National conference and its leader, Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, had made it known through the intermediaries and common friends that they would support Kashmir's accession to India. The Kashmir Maharaja, Sri Hari Singh, who was being advised by his Raj Guru and some extremist elements, did not want to join India as Panditji had made introduction of popular rule in the state a pre-condition. Though he had been advised by Lord Louis Mountbatten to make up his mind to join India or Pakistan before August 15, 1947, Sir Hari Singh, who thought that feudalism could survive in this country even after independence, did not exercise the option. Instead, he signed a standstill Agreement with Pakistan.

He was perhaps under the impression that he had found a clever way out of the impasse and had succeeded in checkmating Sheikh Abdullah and his friend, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru whom he had arrested at Kohalla when he was on his way to Srinagar to defend Sheikh Abdullah being tried for sedition. It was typical of the feudalistic attitude of a limited horizon to think that (a) Pakistan would honour the Standstill Agreement with Kashmir, and (b) the armed forces of the State, who totaled 9,000 rifles, would be able to guard its sprawling borders with India and Pakistan.

In fact, the Maharaja and his Dewan , Mr.Mehr Chand Mahajan conveyed to leaders like Acharya Kriplani and others that if Pakistan tried to create trouble in Kashmir, the State Forces would be in a position to deal a “crushing blow” to them.

The politics of the subcontinent at that moment had become vitiated because of the partition, which had resulted in a massive population exchange between the two Dominions and unprecedented devastation, destruction and blood shed. Punjab was in flames. The North –West Frontier Province, which had adopted the Gandhian ideology of Ahimsa, secularism and communal harmony, had been forced to accede to Pakistan, as the province had no land link with India. Jinnah had made the boast that Kashmir was in his pocket and the letter Kashmir in the new Dominion of Pakistan stood for Kashmir, which would have willy nilly to join his Dominion

The Invasion

While minutes were ticking away, Nehru was undecided about accepting the instrument of Accession. It was Sheikh Abdullah who urged Nehru for immediate acceptance. And dispatch of troops to Kashmir.

With most of the National Conference leaders either in jail or outside Kashmir because of the Maharaja’s repressive policies, the valley was not prepared either militarily or politically to meet the Pakistani invasion.

The Kabailies, who crossed the Kohalla bridge from Muzzafarabad side in the last week of October, were armed with modern weapons supplied by the Pakistan Army. They were led by the commanders of the Pakistan Army. They came in great waves and destroyed everything in their wake. In their madness, they spared nobody, young or old, Muslim or non-Muslim. They took whatever caught their fancy and raped any woman they saw. The nuns in Baramulla convent were not spared, neither were Muslim ladies, a number of whom jumped into the Jhelum, which flows along the route from, Kohalla to Srinagar.

A middle-aged woman, who had gone to Baramulla to attend a marriage, took poison to escape the ignominy of gang rape by the Kabailis. Maqbool Sherwani, a National Conference leader was caught by the Kabailis in Baramulla. They dragged him to the City Chowk and strapped him to a wooden cross in front of a firing squad. He was ordered to shout “Pakistan Zindabad”. Facing sure death, Sherwani shouted “Hindustan Zindabad”. The firing squad riddled his body with bullets and the Kabailies nailed a piece of paper to his forehead warning others from standing for India.

On hearing about the Kabailie invasion, the Maharaja had asked the Chief of the Army Staff of the Jammu and Kashmir State Forces, Brigadier Rajinder Singh, to go to Uri and stop the invastion. The Maharaja had commanded the General to fight “to the last man and the last bullet” – an order carried out by General Rajinder Singh in letter and spirit.

Despite being hopelessly outnumbered and critically wounded, he fought till the end and made the supreme sacrifice, for which he was given Maha Vir Chakra posthumously.

Sack Of Kohalla

Three days from October 24 to 27 caused a great deal of anguish and anxiety to those of us who were watching the Kashmir scene from Delhi. On the morning of October 24, most of Kohalla was in flames, as the invaders had entered the state from Muzzafarabad side, looting and burning everything in their path. Mr.P.N. Wanchoo woke up amidst a big commotion outside. When he jumped out of his bed and peeped through the window of the Dak Bungalow, he saw people running helter-skelter with the tribesmen shooting all and sundry. Looting whatever they could lay their hands to and burning shops, buildings and haystacks. A horrified Wanchoo was a helpless spectator to the indiscriminate looting and massacre of old men being gunned down and children being bayoneted and women being raped at gun point.

He ran out in pyjamas and a pair of bath chappals. Hiding himself during the day in the maize fields and walking through the fields during the night, he reached Mahura power station (a few miles upstream the Jhelum river) completely shaken and totally bewildered. His clothes were tattered and feet covered with blisters for years. He suffered from nightmares and hallucinations. Ten years later, he told me about the harrowing experience that they had undergone. Even at that distance in time, he was shaken to recall the events of those October days.

There is a famous saying about Mohammed Shah Rangila, who dithered while Nadir Shah moved along with his hordes towards Delhi. When informed of the invasion, Mohammed Shah Rangila said, "Hanooz Dilli Door Ast " (Delhi is still far away) and went back to his normal pastime of Mujra and Naach. This is how the Maharaja had treated the threat from Pakistan about which he was warned by Acharya Kripalani and others. When reminded of his inability to resist an invasion from Pakistan, he consulted his Raj Guru, who assured him that it was ordained for him to become a great king who would rule over large parts of India and Pakistan.

In 1947, Dussehra fell on 25th of October, it was a big day in Kashmir when a colourful parade drawn up by the State Forces, was reviewed in the Chandmari Maidan by the Maharaja, wearing the uniform of a general and riding a white stallion. I remember having seen this show as a kid on the shoulders of my grandfather and feeling greatly thrilled with the ceremonial, the drums, the pipes, the bands, and the rhythmic movement of the marching feet.

Durbar, As Usual

At night, the Maharaja used the family palace called Shergarhi, on the banks of the river Jhelum. The Durbar used to be a glittering affair. All the officers wearing brocade achkans, carrying swords in bejeweled scabbards attended the durbar. All Officers

presented to the Maharaja ‘Nazrana ‘ (a cash tribute) wrapped in silk or brocade. That night the lights went off in the middle of the ceremony. Mahura power station, which supplied electricity to the whole of Kashmir Valley, had been captured and destroyed by the tribals. Panic gripped the courtiers and they pleaded with the Maharaja to ask the Governor General to send help immediately. Around midnight the Maharaja contacted Lord Louis Mountbatten for military assistance.

Instrument Of Accession

Next morning, while the Maharaja’s request was being considered at a meeting of India’s Defence Committee, the States Secretary, VP Menon, assisted by two staff officers of the Indian Army and the Air Force was sent to Kashmir. He returned to the capital the same day with the instrument of Accession duly executed by the Maharaj. Before the accession was accepted, both the Kashmir Prime Minister, Mehar Chand Mahajan and the National Conference leader, Sheikh Abdullah, had discussions with Nehru on the subject. According to Mehar Chand Mahajan, Sheikh Abdullah came to his (Nehru’s) rescue by ‘urging immediate acceptance of the accession and dispatch of troops to Kashmir’

Their Concept Of Pakistan

While leaders like Pandit Nehru, Sheikh Abdullah and Mountbatten were playing the constitutional drama of Kashmir’s accession, more ruthless and ferocious Pakistani hordes were striking terror and destruction in Kashmir, thus turning the world famous ‘Happy Valley’ into a valley of death, destruction and devastation. During the three days between October 24 and 27, thousands of people were killed, wounded or maimed. If there were a body of men who ever deserved the epithet of being ‘trigger happy’, the Pakistani invaders were one.

Wherever they went, the smoke of violence, hatred and senseless killings rose to the sky. Anything moving was shot, anything glittering was taken and any building or hamlet in sight was set ablaze – all to the glory of the Two – Nation Theory and their own concept of Pakistan. As panic spread and the Maharaja realized that delivering a crushing blow to the invader was only a dream, he decided that discretion was the better part of valour. In the darkness of the night of October 27-28, he left his summer capital followed by a cavalcade of royal cars. The scene has been graphically described by Dr.Karan Singh, in his book “Heir Apparent”.

All through that night, which Dr.Karan Singh describes as dreadful, the royal cavalcade of cars moved slowly and haltingly. The convoy crawled over the 9,000 ft. Banihal pass, just as first light was beginning to break. When the Maharaja and his family stopped at Kud, 60 miles from Jammu they saw that a cream coloured car had joined “our grim procession”. Dr.Karan Singh says “it was Swami Sant Dev whose miraculous powers did not include capacity to face the raiders”. When the Maharaja finally reached Jammu in the evening and pulled up at the palace he uttered one sentence, “We have lost Kashmir”.

People's Resistance

With the signing of the instrument of Accession and the decision to send troops to Kashmir, Sheikh Abdullah wanted to go to Srinagar by the first available plane. Towards late in the afternoon, State forces were no match to the raiders. However, the raiders did not advance in the night. Next morning, they were met by the Indian troops who were able to roll them back towards Baramulla.

During the night, Sheikh Sahib was restless and angry. Every half-an-hour he wanted to talk to his Deputy, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad. On every occasion, he told him "Hold on for God's sake for one night-tomorrow. I will be there with the first aircraft". In between Sheikh Abdullah prayed. All of us sitting in Panditji's spacious reception room shed tears and offered silent prayers for the safety of the State and our kith and kin in the Valley.

Nobody slept that night. We were all apprehensive about the fall of the airport. If the airport fell, Kashmir would be lost as the road link with the state was not developed. The track between Pathankot and Jammu, going over 70 miles, was studded with three rivers, including the Ravi which could not be forded by any vehicle. The 9,000 feet high Banihal pass could get blocked by snow any time now. The feeling of utter helplessness increased our bitterness.

Sheikh Abdullah was terribly nervous. He wanted to avoid the massacre of the innocent people in Srinagar. In sheer desperation, Sheikh Abdullah asked me to put him through to Mia Iftikhar-ud-Din who was then a minister of the government of West Punjab (Pakistan). Realizing the desperation that Sheikh Abdullah was suffering from, I did not try to get to Ifti in Lahore.

Lost Valuable Time

Sheikh Abdullah and most of us sat through the night in Panditji's big Reception Room trying to get whatever information, we could about the progress of the battle. D.N. Kachru asked me to accompany him and Sheikh Abdullah to Palam Airport. Sheikh Abdullah was excited to go to Kashmir and help in driving out the raiders. We were going by an Impala and the driver was going at 60 to 70 miles per hour. Sheikh Abdullah was urging him to go faster and faster. The other occupants, who included V.P. Menon, were afraid that his impatience might land us in hospital with broken bones. We reached Palam Technical Area at dusk. We were informed by the Air Force Commanders that it was too late to fly to Srinagar. Sheikh Abdullah as crestfallen, two large tears rolled down his eyes. Back at Panditji's house, he was restless like a tiger in a cage. Every few minutes he wanted to talk to Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, who was holding the fort in Srinagar. What Bakshi told him was that there was no State Administration, no Police nor Army. With the flight of the Maharaja, the entire administrative machinery of the state had disintegrated.

Creating An Illusion

As the situation was grim, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad tried to organize people's resistance to the tribal hordes. He collected a volunteer force and armed them with hockey sticks, punting poles, daggers and a few rifles and shotguns collected from shikaries and police stations. He gave this ramshackle force, the name of "The Kashmir Militia" The volunteers around the seven bridges made great noise at regular intervals by shouting slogans and firing in the air to create the illusion of a big force preparing to meet the raiders who were camping at Chhatabal, a suburb of Srinagar. We all knew that the volunteers were at the outskirts of Srinagar.

The raiders who were an undisciplined lot, lost valuable time in murder and loot. They did not secure the airport. That was their undoing. Early next morning, Indian troops were flown in. one of the first planes carried Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and the famous Sikh Regiment commanded by Col.Ranjit Rai. As soon as they landed at the airport, they secured it. In the next few hours, more army contingents were flown to Srinagar as all civil aircraft were diverted to fly troops to Kashmir.

On arrival in Kashmir, Col.Rai found that he had a difficult task. He had to face the raiders whose strength was estimated at 5,000. His dilemma was to defend or to attack. He wanted to slow down the raiders' movement towards Srinagar to give enough time for the Army to build up its strength in the State Capital. He went forward towards Baramulla with a few companies, traveling by ordinary trucks driven by civilian Kashmiri drivers. He met the enemy a mile off Baramulla.

The enemy was using machineguns and mortars. After this engagement, Col.Rai withdrew to Pattan, half way between Baramulla and Srinagar. Next morning another engagement took place between his troops and the enemy in which Col.Rai died. Col.Rai performed a kind of 'Jauhar' in the tradition of the Rajput defenders of the years gone by. By his act of gallantry, he slowed down the enemy and gave the Indian planners sufficient time to fly more troops and ammunition. Later events are part of history and the campaigns conducted by generals like Cariappa, Kulwant Singh and Thimayya have earned a lot of acclaim from the military assessors.

By Somnath Dhar , The Pioneer , March 1, 1987.

As a Post Script, one might glance back to the last days of royalty and a common man's point of view about what the Maharaja's Durbar meant to the officers of the state Government. A first person account by one officer who attended the last Durbar held by the Maharaja of Kashmir on October 25th 1947.

The Last Durbar (October 25, 1947)

During the reign of the late Maharaja Hari Singh, the last Maharaja State the Durbar used to be held twice a year, at Srinagar. As gazetted officers of the State, we had to proffer the nazrana (tribute) to the Maharaja whose full title was Shriman Indar Mahindar Rajrajeshwar Maharajadhiraj Shri Hari Singhji, Jammu Kashmir Naresh tatha Tibet adi deshahhipathi. Complementing the glory of the ruler of Jammu, Kashmir and Tibet etc., the Durbar was a grandeloquent affair.

To suit the occasion, we had to dress up as petty Rajas- wearing close fitting achkan, churidar an turban. The colour of the turban was prescribed each time; the achkan material had to be shining, colourful brocade or Benarsi silk. Ask me whether I could afford it, on a salary of Rs. 120 in the grade of Rs. 100-10-200. I managed to get one from a retired officer, who was too glad to part with it at a throwaway price.

There were important preliminaries. One had to secure a gold sovereign or half a sovereign, according to one's status. Our college accountant had secured the required number of coins, and we were given one or the other against a receipt. The coin was to be presented as the nazrana to His Highness, whether the Durbar was held at the old Shergadhi Palace, on the bank of Jhelum, off the First Bridge which was also called Amira Kadal, or , the new palace, off the Dal lake.

The Durbar that I am describing was held at the riverside palace, after the celebration of the Dusserah which the Maharaja had attended in a big ground. Three of us took a tonga from Karan Nagar. We had to be careful in occupying our seats, for, to complete the petty Raja image, we had to carry a sword, in a proper scabbard and wear a leather belt over the achkan.

Reaching the palace, we were treated to soft drinks, and lined up, the full sovereign ones getting precedence. When the proper Durbar began, one by one we were led towards the big chair occupied by His Highness. Wearing a turban, of the same colour as was ordained for us all, high neck adorned by many necklaces, the Maharaja indeed looked majestic. The nazrana presentation followed.

As each one of us sidled forward , the one at the head had to make three bows before reaching the seated monarch. The bows were regulated by three roundish designs beautifully woven into the huge wall to wall carpet. The first now was a kind of bending the back a little more, while holding on to the sword, the third was a proper, reverential bow followed by putting the sovereign (or Half) on one's palm, over a silk hankerchief and preferring it to the monarch.

It struck no one that the whole put up show was an anachronistic ceremony. We dressed up as petty Rajas, were put through our paces. As the show was over, the lights went off. We were shocked. This was the signal that Mohurra Power Station, which was on the way of th tribal raiders from Pakistan, had been destroyed by them, on the Jhelum Valley Road. The Maharaja knew about the goings-on. HE had already got loaded all his valuables, even including the riverside palace idols, in a fleet of cars and lorries and left

Srinagar , taking the Banihal Cartroad.

Events moved fast. The Maharaja signed the instrument of Accession of the State to India, at Jammu . Srinagar was saved in the nick of time by Indian troops flown expeditiously by the Indian Air Force. From Srinagar rooftops we could see IAF planes bombing the tribal warriors who were trying to capture the airport. Their designs were defeated.

As for Maharaja Hari Singh, he left Jammu for Bombay. He never returned to the state. He abdicated the throne in favour of his son, Yuvraj Karan Singh. Later, he was elected Sadr-I-Riyasat, but he never held any Durbar. The pomp and pageantry of the royalty was gone. Hari Singh died in Bombay , at the age of 66 on Sept 26, 1961.

By Prof. Somnath Dhar, H.T, Oct.1975

The Girl Who delayed the raiders

The story of a young mysterious girl who changed the course of history.

The story of Hasina Begum dates back to the partition of India on the night of August 14, 1947. While almost all the princely states agreed to accede to either India and Pakistan, the ruler of Kashmir Maharaja Hari Singh, could not make up his mind. The deadline August 14, 1947 – passed off but Maharaja Hari Singh continued to dither and waver. He perhaps entertained the dream of making Kashmir an independent nation. But this was not acceptable to the British.

Pakistan now decided to take over the state by sending across hordes of made tribesmen from the North West Frontier Province in October 1947.. The operation, code named operation Gulmarg, was led by Major General Akbar Khan of the Pakistan Army. According to his calculations, as the roads connecting the border towns to Srinagar were in excellent shape, any resistance put up by Kashmir's own forces would be feeble and ineffective.

Further, the tribesmen had been given good incentive to do the job, a carte blanche to indulge in loot, rape and plunder. Major General Akbar Khan assured his political bosses that the entire operation to capture Srinagar would not take more than 36 hours. Military strategists agree that Major General Khan had been very accurate in his assessment had not Hasina Begum played the role chalked out for her by destiny.

On D-Day , October 22, 1947, some five thousand frontier tribesman consisting of Afridis, Wazirs, Mahsuds, Swathis and soldiers of the Pakistan Army 'on leave', crossed the border into Kashmir in about three hundred lorries and buses. They were led by the regular Pakistan Army. Amid loud singing and joyous shouting, the mighty column traveled from Abbotabad in the N.W.P.F, along the Jhelum Valley Road in the direction of Srinagar. The first towns they hit were Garhi and Domel where they

ransacked every house and raped women they could lay hands on. They then moved on towards Muzaffarabad.

At Muzaffarabad, the tribesmen had no problem in overcoming the feeble resistance offered by the battalion of the State Forces led by Lt. Col. Narain Singh. Here, too they set about their orgy of loot, plunder and rape. In the process, they forgot that they had been scheduled to reach Baramulla after crossing Uri by nightfall. As it had already become dark they decided to encamp at Muzaffarabad for the night. Brigadier Rajinder Singh, Chief of Staff of Kashmir State Forces, decided to make a dash for Uri by nightfall. As it had already become dark, the raiders decided to encamp at Muzaffarabad.

By now, the news of tribal invasion had reached Srinagar. With 200 of his best men, Brigadier Rajinder Singh left for Uri (62 miles from Srinagar), in whatever vehicles he could lay hands on in the early hours of October 23. Nobody knows what exactly was on his mind because it was impossible for the Brigadier to tackle the large body of tribesmen with his 200 strong force. The Brigadier reached Uri in mid morning and immediately set about wiring a big steel girder bridge which lay on the path of the tribesmen on the outskirts of the city with explosives.

The tribesmen arrived by the afternoon and on findings their path obstructed by the Brigadier and his men decided to tackle them before proceeding. Finding himself encircled, the Brigadier ordered the blowing up of the bridge. This delayed the advance of the motorized column of the tribesmen by a day and a half – a further setback to Major General Akbar Khan's original plans. The Brigadier and all his men were later killed in the battle that followed. It took the tribesmen the rest of the day, and half of the following day (October 24), in laying a makeshift bridge of felled trees to get across the obstacles where the bridge had been blown up. After that, they continued with their advance towards Mahura. The first thing they did on reaching there was to blow up the power house that supplied electricity to Srinagar.

This happened when Maharaja Hari Singh was busy hosting a party in his palace for the elite of Srinagar. Suddenly Srinagar became dark while Hari Singh was in his bath room. With some difficulty he rushed to the banquet hall where everything was chaotic. He shouted for the fuses to be checked and for the candles to be lit. He was in a state of frenzy and kept muttering loudly: "It is all over, It is all over."

Major-General Akbar Khan, according to his revised calculations, informed his political bosses in Karachi that the capture of Srinagar was now imminent on the evening of October 26 itself as all that lay between the tribesmen and Srinagar was the town of Baramulla, which could pose no problem at all. No other obstacle of any kind lay between Baramulla and Srinagar and it was a clear run through for the tribesmen. But they never anticipated that there was one Hasina Begum to wreck his plan..

When the tribesmen entered Baramulla early on October 26, they launched out into a frenzied spree of killing, looting and raping. Then suddenly, the tribesmen saw a bewitching beautiful girl in all her finery, dancing in the space before her house. Somebody began to clap in a rhythmic manner, in step with the girl's dancing, and very soon the entire crowd joined in. All available liquor the tribesmen were carrying was

brought out. As the night wore on, the raiders consumed peg after peg and enjoyed the food cooked by the womenfolk.

It was nearing midnight when she finally finished and went back to a house, smiling away. One of the other ladies was called upon to sing. The feasting and revelry went on till the early hours of the next morning.

Opportunity lost : By staying behind at Baramulla to watch Hasina Begum's dance, the tribesmen lost a golden opportunity to take over Srinagar, and with it the Kashmir Valley. As they indulged in their merry making at Baramulla, events moved at a fast pace in Delhi. Brisk Preparations were afoot to airlift the first available infantry battalion – the First Sikh- to Srinagar. It was one of the most amazing airlifts ever carried out in history. The credit for this noteworthy accomplishment goes to Lt. Col. Dewan Ranjit Rai, the commanding officer of the First Sikh, succeeded in presenting himself and his men, at Palam airport at 4 .a.m. on October 27. 1947.

At precisely 4 a.m, the first aircraft was ready for take-off. It was a journey into the unknown. Nobody knew what to expect. There was no information as to whether Srinagar had been taken over by the tribesmen, as the last reports had indicated that they were in Baramulla and fully poised to take over the city. There was also no indication about the state of Srinagar airstrip. After the first aircraft took off, the subsequent aircraft followed from Palam and safdarfang (It was known as Willingdon airport at that time) airports.

After a refuelling stop at Jammu, the leading Dakota followed by waves of others took off for the last lap to Srinagar. The 45 minute journey was traversed without any hitch. The weather fortunately was good. The leading aircraft circled the Srinagar airstrip three times and finally it was decided that it was safe to land as no enemy was seen in the vicinity. At 9.30 a.m. on October 27 1947, the first contingent of Indian troops set foot on the soil of Kashmir.

Magnificent job : Lt. Col. Ranjit Rai immediately set about organizing his defences around the airstrip. By mid day the First Sikh had landed in complete battalion strength. From that point onwards began the battle for Srinagar, the events and the end results being too well known to need any recounting. In this battle, the first Param Vir Chakra was awarded to Major Som Nath Sharma posthumously. Our Jawans and officers did a magnificent job in tackling the tribal invasion and frustrating Pakistan's designs on Srinagar and the Kashmir valley in the nick of time..

The role played by Hasina Begum, in delaying the tribesman at Baramulla on the night of October 26, giving our troops time to fly into Srinagar, will always be remembered. Her story was known from the tribesman who were captured by our forces. Even today she is talked about in the Army messes in India.

What fate befell Hasina Begum is not known. When Baramulla was overrun by our troops later, there was no sign of her. Some say she committed suicide soon after her dance performance. Another version has it that in spite of the assurance given to her, the tribesmen gang raped her and her mother and did them both to death before leaving

Baramula for Srinagar in the early hours of October 27. There is also the story that Hasina Begum quietly slipped out of Baramula with her mother and disappeared to safety. Who knows Hasina Begum, may yet come forward and tell her exciting story?

27

Eviction Unabated

Even before the 1989-90 attacks on Pandits in the Kashmiri Valley by the Pakistan inspired insurgency, there was a steady eviction of Pandits from the Valley. The instrument of eviction was very simple. No scope for jobs and shrinking opportunities for higher technical education.

Mr.M.Rasgotra, former Foreign Secretary of Government of India has summed it up with necessary details.

“At the turn of the century, the population of the Kashmir Valley’s Pandits was close to a million. Today, no more than a few thousand remain. More than 300,000, driven out by Muslim fanatics at gunpoint in 1990-91, are living precariously in refugee camps in Jammu, Delhi and elsewhere.

“Cleansing the valley of its Pandits has been going on since July 1931, when the first Muslim-Hindu riot took place there. Even under the Dogra rule, the Kashmiri Pandits were not favoured in the matter of recruitment to government service. Feeling vulnerable and neglected following the riot, they started moving out to Indian cities. A few adventurous ones left for foreign lands. Some 30,000 to 40,000 families are said to have moved out of Kashmir in the 1931-41 decade.

“According to the 1941 census, the Kashmir valley’s population comprised 15 per cent Pandits as against 83 per cent Muslims. Twenty-five or even 30 per cent would be a more realistic figure of the Pandits at that time. Kashmir’s censuses, conducted by junior, local Muslim officials are notorious for describing Pandit households as Muslim families. The 1941 census marks the beginning of a statistical assault on the Pandits’ numbers.

“India’s independence and Kashmir’s accession did little to improve the fortunes of the Valley’s Pandits numbering about 800,000 at that time. They remained as vulnerable as before. Virtually none of the billions in so-called development funds poured into the state by the Union Government reached them. For that matter, nor did much of that bounty reach the backward Muslim communities, such as Gujjars and Bakarwals.

“At the time of Pakistan’s invasion of Kashmir in 1947, some Pandit families did flee to safety in India, but most of them returned to their homes after the raiders were expelled. In a curious development, the state administration floated figures varying from 80,000 to 120,000 as representing the number of the Pandits remaining in the Valley. After visiting Kashmir, Ram Manohar Lohia mentioned in a letter to Nehru that no more than 80,000 Pandits were left in the valley.

“The effect of all this was to deny the Pandits their due representation in the State legislature. The design was further advanced by gerrymandering the constituencies in the Pandit-dominated areas of Srinagar, Anantnag, etc. to eliminate any possibility of the community putting up and electing candidates of its choice. To create an illusion of fairness in the matter, the administration did, however, ensure that one but never more than one—Pandit found his way to the State Legislature, often with Muslim voters’ support. This also helped to justify to some extent the statistical violence on the Pandits numbers.

“The 1981 census put the Pandits’ number at a little over 124,000 in a total population of 3.1 million. Their share in the valley’s population was down to five per cent as against 15 per cent in the 1941 census with a corresponding rise in the percentage of Muslims, up from 83 per cent in 1941 to 95 per cent in 1981. the enormity of this injustice perpetrated by supposedly secular and democratic Government on this hapless community stood exposed in 1990, when 300,000 Pandits – men, women and children – fled the valley under threat of the terrorists’ guns and poured into hastily –organised refugee camps in Jammu and other places.

“The statistical assault continued, this exposure notwithstanding. The 1991 census places the Pandits share of the Valley’s population at 0.1 per cent which would translate into a head count of 3,000. I believe some 50,000 or more are still in the valley and another unaccounted 100,000 or so temporarily sheltered with relatives in Jammu and elsewhere in India.

“Our own human rights enthusiasts, ever ready to smear the image of our armed forces engaged in fighting Pakistan’s dirty proxy war in Kashmir, have done little to highlight the Pandits’ plight. Worse still, our media’s casual, almost cynical, treatment of this slow – motion tragedy, thoughtless and repeated description of these victims of denial, deprivation and terror as ‘migrants’, has inured the country to this grievous wrong. It has dulled the nation’s sense of responsibility towards an abused and aggrieved minority and lulled the authorities into complacency and inaction.

“In all the current fuss in New Delhi concerning economic and political packages for Kashmir and plans to conduct elections to normalize the situation there, no one seems to spared a thought for the Pandits. The modalities of their participation in the elections, and the question of their rehabilitation in Kashmir, ought to figure in these packages and electoral plans.”

Aug. 26,1995, Indian Express.

Daughters of Vitasta

The Vitasta is long regarded as one of the holiest rivers. It originates from the beautiful spring at Verinag and flows across the valley of Kashmir. Legend has it that the Vitasta represents the most beneficent form of Goddess Parvati, the consort of Lord Shiva. Successive ruling dynasties down the ages raised beautiful towns on its banks. No doubt, the 5,000-year-old Kashmiri ethos grew and developed on the sacred shores of the river. It is thus closely interwoven with our cultural, social and religious ethos. The city of Srinagar boasted of 16 temples and cobbled Ghats on either side of its banks and most of our religious ceremonies, rituals and festivals have a strong association with this river from which we derive inspiration and spiritual strength.

Alas, the holy water of this river is sullied by the sins of man and its water bloodied from the sacrifices of innocent men, women and children of Kashmir Pandits who felt victims to militancy in 1989-90, leading to the exodus of almost the whole community which has now been living in exile for the last so many years.

It is the blessings of our deities and our faith in our cultural and religious traditions and the collective will of the community that has helped us survive and sustain in exile. This was possible to a large extent by our women, who rather than giving into physical and moral degradation and dissipation in the face of worst upheavals and utmost hardships, stood like citadels of virtue and courage and held the families together not only to preserve our rich cultural heritage but also to raise us from a state of rootlessness to a position of pride in exile.

The strength and will of our women and the feeling of pride that they have generated has earned them the unique title of "Daughters of Vitasta", for they are the true heirs to the legacy of Mother Parvati. The concept of daughters is aimed at creating the consciousness of the prime position that women hold in our family and community structure.

Each one of our women deserves this distinction and once she is reminded of her origin from that great source of divine power, "Shakti", and of her innate capabilities of giving life, protecting and sustaining it, she becomes an object of worship herself. The idea is to restore to our women the unique status which they deserve for they are the epitome of supreme moral strength, renunciation, dedication, love and sacrifice.

Exodus, exile and diaspora have threatened even the most vibrant and hardy communities with erosion of their cultural traditions and moral and spiritual values, destroying their very identity. While in exile, we have witnessed some dilution of our pride from our great heritage because of the obvious pressures and pulls. Our language (mother tongue) is languishing as our younger generation is being brought up in the ambience of different languages of the regions where we have taken refuge for shelter and sustenance, our youthful boys and girls have grown a tendency, not unnatural under the circumstances, of marrying out of the community and our population is shrinking as

we are faced with more deaths than new births. At this rate, we may fast lose our cultural, ethnic, genetic and linguistic identity and find our place in the dustbin of civilization. It is our women who can help us pull out of this dilemma by balancing our population, by imbibing respect for the mother-tongue in the new generation only by including a sense of pride in the values and virtues of our rich cultural ethos.

The Daughters of Vitasta, who are the bulwark of our family and social life, have already vindicated their claim not just to equality with men but even a superior status by the great strides they are taking in different walks of life from medicine to engineering, to education and to art and literature. They are supreme both inside and outside the home and it is now their turn to lead in creating not only that sense of social and cultural identity which sustains us as a community but also of the political will which shall reclaim our Homeland for us. There is no dearth of Lal Deds, Animals and Rupa Bhawanis amongst our women. We have only to give them a chance. Let us enrol each female of our community as a daughter of Vitasta.

Panun Kashmir .

Vanishing Species

From the early 30s to late 80s is a period of nearly half century. One journalist who can be described as one of the father figures of journalism in Kashmir was Pandit R.K. Kak. He reported Kashmir in the National dailies in depth. Highly respected, he was perhaps the most knowledgeable person who was familiar with every aspect of Kashmir.

This writer had the good fortune of knowing this extraordinary journalist during his last visit to the Kashmir Valley. One day, we had a discussion in 1987 in his Pratap Park house. He told me the following.

After the Pakistani invasion had been halted and the raiders pushed back, normal administration was restored. In the early 50s one of the senior secretaries of the GOI visited Kashmir and R.K.Kak went to meet him. During the meeting Kak, asked about the fate of the minority in the Valley. He meant Kashmiri Pandits of course.

The worthy member of the steel frame categorically declared that the GOI did not care what happened to the minority and they (GOI) would not hesitate to sacrifice his miniscule minority if its interests dictated so. Kak was horrified to hear this and the related this me nearly 37 years later. A prophetic declaration it was, but the sequel is given in the words of author Anil Maheshwari in his book Crescent over Kashmir.

Bansi Parimu, the internationally known painter says:

Parimu asked S.B.Chavan the then Union Minister for Human Resources – who had visited Srinagar in 1986 in connection with a project for the wildlife conservation in the Valley, “I believe you are interested in the preservation of the endangered species of stags.” Answering in the affirmative, Chavan said, “It is a project much after the heart of Governor Jagmohan and I too am interested.” Parimu asked, “But why cannot you do

something about the other endangered species here?” “Which endangered species??” asked Chavan. Pat came the reply. Even Parimu who was hounded out by terrorists from the Valley and died in wilderness in New Delhi in 1991, did not know that he was making a prophesy about the fate of the minuscule minority in the Valley.

From Anil Maheshwari in “Crescent Over Kashmir”.

“The eminent journalist and writer Arun Shourie, while complimenting the Kashmiri Hindus on their efforts, confessed during the World Conference of Kashmiri Pandits in Geneva: “You have done far better than we Punjabis in responding to the challenges posed by terrorism and fundamentalism. The outbursts of Dr.Gh.Nabi Fai, the leader of Kashmir American council in front of Pandit delegates in Geneva, after Pakistan was forced to withdraw the crucial resolution against India in NHRC, was only a compliment to Pandits. “We were defeated by Kashmiri Pandits and not by the Government of India”, he said.

By Dr.Ajay Chrungoo Form Vitasta

Persecution And Forced Exodus

Says the Spirit of Kashmiri Pandits personified:

“I fled along with thousands of others, on foot, and on horse backs through dense and dark forests, crossing 9000 to 14000 feet high peaks of Pir Panjal. En route to the plains, many died of hunger, most of them detoured to Baderwah and Kishtwar from Batawath (Pandit Route) which has got metamorphosed into Batote. Some settled there, while some dragged on and found refuge in Allahabad , Varanasi, Delhi (at Sitaram Bazar), Lucknow (in Kashmiri Mohalla) and even as far as in Assam to save themselves from the Barbarians and the Vandals.

The condition is no different between 1320 and 1948 onwards. On a NAVREH (New Year) function held at the Constitution Club (Now called Vithal Bhai Patel House) in the year 1950, **Late K.N.Katju, the then Home Minister of India, said, “Then we fled on foot or on horse backs and now we use vehicular transport-conditions have not changed”.** Late Jawahar Lal Nehru, Late Smt.Rameshori and Late Dr.Sidh Nath Kaul, all were present.

Vitasta, 1999-2000 by K.L.Moza, Noida

28

The Kashmiri Language

“Language is the key to knowledge. Kashmir has been a seat of learning in history. Kashmiri language can unfold a lot of historical wisdom contained in our ancient scriptures.”

Pandit Anand Kaul in his work “The Kashmir Pandit” reminds us that in the middle ages particularly “no scholar could be considered well accomplished unless and until he had associated himself with the illustrious learned men in Kashmir ...”He quotes Hiuen Tsiang who visited Kashmir in 631 AD and engaged himself in studying Sanskrit : “The people of Kashmir love learning and are well cultured. Since centuries, learning has been held in great respect in Kashmir “.

Kashmiri language should therefore be promoted among our researches and younger scholars. Foreign scholars should be encouraged to work upon our ancient literature. It was the efforts of M.A.Stein and W.R.Lawrence who made research studies on Kashmir literature , and history and on Lalded’s Vaaks.

Although we are proud of our heritage of learning, we did not modernize our language to bring it within the reach of the common man in a systematic manner. It was left to a foreign missionary “William Carey who was probably the first European Scholar to discover that Kashmir had a language of its own. It is an Aryan tongue of the great Sanskrit stock, written in the same Semitic character as Urdu, with an additional thirty seventh letter; for the Mohammedan conqueror imposed a fine of five rupees for writing it in Sanskrit, and offered a reward of five rupees for writing it in Persian characters.

According to Dr.Cust, it is spoken by half a million people; but the unpatriotic Kashmiris affect to despise their own tongue, and like it to be taken for granted that they know Urdu. The Rev.T.R.Wade completed the Kashmiri New Testament, after six years of labour, in 1883; it and the Kashmir Prayer Book were published in 1884. In 1897 Mr.Knowles completed the translation of the Old Testament.

(Missionary to Kashmir – Irene Petrie , London, May 1900)

Irene Petrie a lady missionary who came to India in 1893, but unfortunately died at an early age in Ladakh in 1897. She learned the Kashmiri Language. Her biography published after her death in 1900 says, “Irene having passed in Urdu in 1895, accordingly presented herself in 1897 for examination in Kashmiri, a tongue in which two Europeans had hitherto been examined, some half a dozen only having learned it.

The language is difficult and uncertain in itself, and there are hardly any books to help the student. Nor is it easy to express oneself colloquially with the limited vocabulary of

the uneducated, for whom the more accurate terms borrowed from Sanskrit, Persian, and Arabic by the translators of the Bible into Kashmiri would be unintelligible.”

Among the common people, Kashmiri language is a tool for communication and a means to share common brotherhood. A minimum training in the use of Kashmir language should form part of our global reform movement. Through Kashmiri language, our younger generation can acquire knowledge about culture, history and eminent saints and people.”

Prof. S.Bhatt, Vitasta, New Delhi.

Language:

Language is the strongest component of a culture. Everyone is agreed that Kashmiri language must be perpetuated, and that we should teach our children their mother tongue.

Unfortunately, our language has been corrupted over the years through the heavy introduction of words from Persian, Arabic, and English. We should commission our academics to restore the original Kashmiri words where appropriate.

Secondly , language also evolves with time. Our language needs many new words if it is to keep up with the developments in various fields. These need to be coined by our academics.

We need to adopt again the Sharda script, which was abandoned long time ago for historical and political reasons.

Vitasta, Dr.Girdhari Lal Bhan, Dobscoth, U.K.

Our Mother Tongue, Our Identity

“We, the Kashmiri Pandits, are away from our beloved Kashmir. we have left behind our homes, our belongings, our lands and orchards, our shrines and temples, our beloved Vitasta, our revered Amarnath, Tulamulla, Parbat, Khrew and other holy places, and the fond memories of our childhood, neighbourhood and all that.

“ We have lost valuable manuscripts in Sharada and in Sanskrit, which reflect our glorious past, the greatness of our ancestors and the valuable contribution made by us to the various branches of learning. Our exodus from Kashmir has been prompted by three broad reasons.

“First, most of our community members had to leave their hearths and homes because of persecution during the reign of Muslim rulers, Pathans, Moghuls, etc. The second reason was lack of opportunities for higher education and employment due to the naked religious bias that has been prevailing there since 1947-48. The third and most horrifying cause has been militancy, ethnic cleansing and gun culture of the last 11 years that has threatened our honour, dignity and survival. This resulted in the mass exodus of our community and we got scattered in Jammu, Delhi and other cities of the country as also elsewhere outside India.

“We have left behind many valuable possessions but have carried with us many precious things. These include our rituals, our food habits, our social interactin and, above all, our language, the beloved Kohsur—our mother –tongue. Go to Durga Masalawala in INA Market and he will ask you: “Do you want martsawangan, dubmaha, badiyana, monja anchar or atahor”. The vegetable vendor close by will cry hoarse: “Please buy monja, sotsal, vostahak and nadroo”.

“Our children may per necessity have to speak in Hindi, English or any other language, but they understand Kashmiri and most of them speak it too. It is a treat to our ears when we hear youngsters speak in Kashmiri in foreign lands. May be, occasionally they falter in pronunciation or do not find the right word to express something but they take pride in picking up Kashmiri words by and by. Gone are the days when we used to insist that our children should speak in Hindi or English. The recent trend in our youngsters is that they are eager to learn their own mother-tongue and to know about our culture, rituals and varius unique festivals.

“Kashmiri does not have certain letters of the Devanagari alphabet, like Gh, Jh, Rh, Dh and Bh we are so used to this situation that most of us make mistakes in speaking Hindi where such letters are involved. On the other hand, our children find it difficult to pronounce sounds like tsa, tsha and za. But this need not discourage us and regular practice shall enable us surmount these hurdles. We still need to take a few practical steps to preserve and popularize this language. These are detailed below:

1. We must make it a point to write to our Kashmiri-knowing friends and relatives only in Kashmiri;
2. Organize week-end classes to teach Kashmiri to our children in the areas where there are 10 or more families in a cluster or within a reasonable distance.
3. Start a correspondence course in Kashmiri, preferably from Delhi;
4. Subscribe whole –heartedly to those community journals, which have a Kashmiri section;
5. Engage scholars for research in various aspects of our language so that the distortions, willful or otherwise, are duly countered;
6. Sponsor and subsidize books in Kashmiri;
7. Organize literary and cultural functions periodically, exclusively in Kashmiri in our community halls and other places; and have quiz programmes, recitation competitions, story telling, debates and other such seminars for the youth exclusively in Kashmiri where young talent can be encouraged by awarding suitable prizes.

It is of paramount importance that we patronize the Devanagari script with the modifiers suggested by experts, with due regard to the facilities available in computers and other printing devices.

T.N.Dhar ‘Kundan’, Koshur Samachar, July 2001.

Script

“Various scripts have been used for Kashmiri. The main scripts are : Sharda, Devanagri, Roman and Persio-Arabic. The Sharda script, developed around the 10th century, is the oldest script used for Kashmiri. It is now being used for very restricted purposes (for writing horoscopes etc.) by the priestly class of the Kashmiri Pandit community. The Devanagri script with additional diacritical marks has also been used for Kashmiri and is still being used by some writers. The Roman script has also been used for Kashmiri but could not become popular. The Persio-Arabic script with additional diacritical marks has been recognized as the official script for Kashmiri by the Jammu and Kashmir Government and is now being widely used. Most of the books are being printed in this script.

Professor Omkar N.Kaul ,Vitasta (1998-99).

“The languages now spoken, which are derived from the original and pure Sanskrit, are denominated Pracrit. The Italian is a Pracrit of Latin. The Hindu, Gujerati, Tirhutya, Bengali dialects, and others, are Pracrits. The language of Kashmir is a Pracrit. The Kashmirians, says Abul Fuzl, have a language of their own. I was told on good authority, that out of one hundred Kashmiri words, twenty – five will be found to be Sanskrit, or a Pracrit, forty Persina, fifteen Hindustani, and ten will be Arabic; some few are also Tibetan.”

G.T.Vigne, Travels In Kashmir ,Ladakh, Iskardo” 1880.

29

Urdu – Whose Mother Tongue?

In 1947, 2.4 million Pakistanis who were then 3.3% of the population of the newborn country, had Urdu as their mother tongue. (72.7 million total population ?) In the whole of Pakistan only 7.3% of population could speak Urdu.

Even before Pakistan was created, it was already decided by the Muslim League that the new country which would become according to them a homeland for the Muslims of the subcontinent, should have its own National Language. For some strange reason, they selected Urdu although at the time of the founding of Pakistan, less than three per cent of the total population had Urdu as their mother tongue.

At that time, only seven per cent of Pakistani population understood Urdu and the dominant language was Bengali. The Muslims of the subcontinent have felt that Urdu was a language of the Muslims, but the only favour in that argument is that the language developed most during the Mughal rule and paradoxically during the British rule especially in the 19th century with substantial contribution from the Hindus of North India.

Our Urdu

Strange as it may sound, Urdu had something to do with the Simla pact which was signed in 1972, after the Bangla Desh war 1971. The Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi had earlier just before the war appointed the Kashmir Minister D.P.Dhar as Chairman of the Policy Planning Committee of the External Affairs Ministry.

A team headed by D.P. Sahib as he was known then, set out for talks with their Pakistani counterparts at Murree hills. Peter Lynn Sinai, a veteran diplomat was a member of the team and he says :

“DP Sahib pondered long and hard in preparing this opening statement, mulling it over and over with all of us members of the delegation. When the talks began, he spoke in Urdu with great eloquence, but was soon interrupted by Aziz Ahmed, his Pakistani counterpart, who requested him to speak in English. A surprised DP exclaimed, “Why do you object to my speaking in your national language?” Aziz Ahmed replied, “When you speak Urdu, you put us all at a disadvantage”. “Then you give me no alternative”, sighed DP and sat back in his chair to collect his thoughts and re-phase them in English. Despite his exceptional command of both languages, he was noticeably translating Urdu’s flowery phrases. In Urdu, not to be flowery sounds impolite, but in English, overstatement seems insincere. It was a discouraging beginning, made worse by the surly stance adopted by the Pakistani side.”

The Pioneer, 14.01.92.

It was after all left to the Kashmiri Pandit to use Urdu for high level diplomacy. Among these were quite a lot of Kashmiri Pandits. Here is what two experts on the subject have to say:

“Kashmiris can justifiably be proud of their great contribution to the development and enrichment of Persian in India from the fourteenth century of the Christian era onwards. Earlier, they had already carved out a special place for themselves in the realms, among others, of Sanskrit language and literature.

The Persian poetical works of some of them had been adjudged, in their times, to be as good as those of the best poets of Iran itself. Habib Ullah Ghanai, ‘Hubbi’ (1556-1617), Mulla Muhammad Tahir, ‘Ghani’ (d.1669), Mirza Darab Beg, ‘Juya’ (d.1707) and Mirza Beg Akmal, ‘Kamil’ (1645-1719) of the Mughal period are in the opinion of Dr.G.L.Tikku of the University of Illinois (U.S.A) only four poets who are, so as to say, landmarks of Persian poetry in Kashmir. Their name and fame traveled as far as Iran in their day.

“During almost a century of Afghan and Sikh rule from about the middle of 1700 A.D. to about the middle of 1800 A.D., Mulla Ashraf, ‘Bulbul’, Abdul Vahab, ‘Shaiq’, Daya Ram Kachru, ‘Khushdil’, Mulla Hamid Ullah, ‘Hamid’, Birbal Kachru, ‘Varasta’ were equally outstanding and far-famed. One could with apologies to chronology, add the distinguished name of Bhawani Dass Kachru ‘Neku’, Raja Kaul Arzabegi, Chandra Bhan ‘Brahmi’, Lachi Ram ‘Saroor’, Narain Dass ‘Zamir’ and a host of others.

“Some of these distinguished men of letters rose to sublime heights of accomplishment which won them deserved acclaim. To those friends who would like to know a little more on the subject, I would recommend a study of “Persian Poetry in Kashmir” by Dr.G.L.Tikku. He has called it only “an Introduction”. But it is much more than that, and provides educative and excellent reading. Dr.Tikku has rendered a signal service to his old, homeland and to all lovers of Persian by bringing out this excellent “introduction”.

“Persian, however, slowly ceased to be the language of the court and of the elite with the eclipse of the Moghuls. Urdu took its place steadily and step by step. The part that Kashmiris played in its development and enrichment has again been historic and all-important. In point of that fact, Kashmiris whether Hindu or Muslim, who migrated to various parts of India from the middle of the seventeenth century onwards and settled down in Punjab, Delhi, Rajasthan, Central India, U.P and even Eastern India, slowly forgot their mother tongue, Kashmiri and used Urdu as such. They ultimately, came to regard Urdu as their mother tongue. In Kashmir itself, Urdu was the court language and therefore in full bloom.

“It would be no exaggeration to say that the very foundations of the Urdu novel and of its fiction were laid by that great but tragic genius, Rattan Nath Dhar ‘Sarshar’. His classic “Fasanai Azad” was universally acclaimed as a great work of art and charted new paths in virgin soil. He was followed by others. These included in recent days Prem Nath Sadhu ‘Pardesi’, and my dear old classmate, Prem Nath ‘Dhar’ who wrote “Kagaz-Ka-Vasudeva” among others.

“In the field of Urdu prose, stalwarts like Tribhuwan Nath ‘Hajar’, Shiv Narain ‘Shamim’, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru to name only a few, rendered yeomen’s service. In Urdu drama, Agha Hashar Kashmiri was the pathfinder and pioneer. His “Yahudi-Ki-Beti” has not lost any of its luster even yet. I will not talk of later day men of letters in these fields.

“Again in the development of Urdu journalism, Kashmiris have played a significant role. In the Kashmir State itself, the legendary Har Gopal Kaul, ‘Khasta’, was almost the father of Urdu journalism. In Lahore, others apart, the name of Gopinath Gurtu of “Akhbar-I-am” fame was one to conjure with to be followed, with passage of time, by Dina Nath Chikan ‘Mast’s’ “Subeh-I-Kashmir”. “Kashmir Kashmir” and “Subeh-I-Umed” of Brij Narain ‘Chakbast’ and “Bahar-I-Kashmir” could again well be mentioned in this connection as specimen from U.P and Lahore.

“Urdu poetry owes a significant debt to Kashmiri genius, Sir Mohammad Iqbal, was a migrant Kashmiri whose family had left Kashmir and settled in Sialkot. The “Masnavi” of Daya Shankar Kaul ‘Nasim’, holds its own even today. Brij Narain Chakbast—a great poet who died young touched the very heights of poetic genius. His “Khak-I-Hind” and poems of the same genre should be read with Iqbal’s “Mera Wattan Wohi Hai” and “Naya Shawab” written very much later. His mastery of Urdu prose was equally superb. The diction, repartee and thrust of “Maarika-i-Chakbast-o-Sharar” are a delight, Pandit Brij Mohan Dattatriy, ‘Kaifi’, was till recently—he died full of years and honours —a venerable name in Urdu literary and cultural circles all over India.

My old and revered teacher in S.P.College Srinagar, Pandit Nand Lal Kaul “Talib” and his friend and contemporary, Pandit Dina Nath Chikan, “Mast”, my earlier and very revered teacher at School, Pandit Nand Lal Din ‘Begaraz’—again to name only a few—also made their valuable contributions to both prose and poetry in Urdu and Persian. My old college mate, that great shining star of Kashmir poetic, literary and cultural firmament, Pandit Dina Nath ‘Nadim’, initially wrote his poetry in Urdu. Some at least of these, which he sweetly recited decades ago, seemed to me then to nearly touch the stars.

Again, the great Kashmiri seer and Savant ‘Masterji ’ Pandit Zinda Kaul, also started as an Urdu poet. Some of his Urdu poems won the applause of old masters. That great nightingale of Kashmir, Ghulam Ahmed ‘Mahjur’ also started with Urdu and made a brilliant success of it. Among living Urdu poets today Pandit Anand Narain Mulla is still acknowledged as the unchallenged high priest.

“Many Kashmiris had invaluable treasures of Persian and Urdu manuscripts with them. They were loathe to part with these and unable to preserve them either tragic consequence. I remember —and this is a child-hood memory—that my grand-father, Pandit Nanak Chand, who had a lovely hand, had copied two rare and lengthy Persian manuscripts on fine Kashmir paper with illuminated margins which were kept in a small wooden box. He died in the prime of life and these could subsequently never be traced.

“Most Kashmiris were aware of this continued and wanton loss of a valuable heritage but seemed either helpless or indifferent. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and some other distinguished Kashmiris of Allahabad, however, decided to cry a halt, to the extent possible to further ravages of this nature. They, therefore, organized with a rare missionary zeal, a collection drive in the fields of Persian and Urdu poetry by Kashmiris in Northern India. This was indeed a Herculean task.

“The dedication and self-less enthusiasm of this small band of lovers of Urdu poetry and of Kashmiris, headed in the field by Pandit Jagmohan Nath Raina, “Shauk”, resulted in the publication finally by 1932 of two excellently brought out volumes of a classic in Urdu, “Bahar-I-Gulshan-I-Kashmir”. It is a monumental work and received a most enthusiastic reception. It earned for Kashmiris not only numberless bouquets, but also warm both Persian and Urdu poetry in a most outstanding manner.

Extracts from the “Kalam” of over three hundred twenty-five Kashmiri poets in Persian and Urdu figured in these two volumes. Peer Pandit Padshah and Rup Bhawani are included amongst a host of others. There are also photographs of the Poets/Poetesses in plenty—a great labour of love. Prose, drama and fiction could not be covered. The canvass would have been too vast. Nearly half a century has elapsed since many Kashmiri flowers have bloomed in the interval in the enchanting gardens of Urdu literature in prose, poetry and drama. But most of us are unaware of this scattered treasure of beauty and this cultural legacy.

A fresh band of re-incarnated Jagmohan Nath Rainas has to be born to take up the thread and bring out another volume to span the uncovered interregnum. This is a labour of love which could again be resumed at Allahabad or at Delhi before it is too late. Lovers of Kashmir, of Kashmiri culture, and of Urdu ought surely to spare some thought for this and put their heads together to evolve an effective plan of action. Surely what some of us could do and achieve in this direction more than fifty years ago can be attempted by some more of us again with equal success given the spirit and the dedication.”

D.K.Kachru, Vitasta, 1998-99, Calcutta.

Our Contribution

“In early forties, at an all-India gathering of Urdu scholars, the delegates were asked to draw a panel of names of people, who wrote correct idiomatic Urdu. Surprisingly, the panel, which consisted of four names, included three Kashmiri Pandits. The panel consisted of Maulvi Abdul Huq, of the Anjuman-I-Tarqi-I-Urdu, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Raja Narendra Nath and Pandit Brij Mohan Datatriya ‘Kaifi’. That was the measure of proficiency achieved by the Kashmiri Brahmins in Urdu language.”

Court Language

“When Islam was introduced in Kashmir in early fourteenth century, Persian became the court language. The Kashmiri Brahmin, with a remarkable flair for adjusting himself to the changed scenario, switched over from Sanskrit to Persian. The speed with which Kashmiris mastered this foreign language was extraordinary. Overnight, the court circulars, the firmans and the judicial pronouncements were written in chaste Persian by Kashmiri Brahmins with the same ease with which they wrote Sanskrit.

“But Kashmiris not only mastered the art of the official language, they also tried their hand at literary forms, notably poetry. Scores of local poets sprang overnight, but their literary output never won any recognition outside the valley. The only exception was Ghani, whose fame transcended India and reached Iran. Even today Ghani is regarded as a greater Persian poet in Iran than Iqbal. Kashmiri Brahmins, continuing the tradition of Kalhana, wrote history of Kashmir in Persian. They are Anand Kaul Ajaz and Birbal Kachroo, whose Persian chronicles are a valuable source of Kashmir history.

“When the Mughul empire decayed, Urdu was born in the over light of the decadent Mughul culture. It was in Urdu that the literary genius of Kashmiris flowered and attained heights never before achieved in Persian.

Mother Tongue

“Kashmiris, who migrated to India in the wake of Pathan repression, made Urdu their mother-tongue and soon forgot Kashmiri. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru once proudly declared: “Urdu is my mother-tongue”.

“The four Kashmiris who have earned for themselves a niche in the history of Urdu literature are Mohammad Iqbal, Ratan Nath Dhar ‘Sarahar’, Daya Shankar Kaul ‘Nasim’, and Brij Narain Chakbast’.

Literary Giant

“The first and foremost Kashmiri to win recognition as a literary giant in Urdu was Pandit Daya Shankar Kaul ‘Nasim’ of Lucknow. He was born in Lucknow in 1811 and died in 1845 at the young age of 34. He was a disciple of the great Urdu poet, ‘Atish’. Nasim’s Gul Bakawali, a versified version of the famed love story, made him immortal., his fame caused envy to many Urdu novelists. Sharar came out with a fantastic story that Nasim was not the real author of the book, but Atish, but Chakbast wrote a spirited defence of Nasim and silenced Sharar and his supporters. This controversy, which has now been settled once for all, was an event of great literary battle in the early part of this century.

“Ratan Nath Dhar was the celebrated author of Fasana Azad, which is regarded as the forerunner of the Urdu novel. He died in Hyderabad in 1904 under mysterious circumstances. The story of his coming to literary prominence is as fascinating as his works. He was a school teacher and wrote a piece for the famous Urdu paper Oudh Punch. The editor at once realized the potential of the writer and invited him to write regularly for his paper. Ratan Nath, with prosperity coming to him became an alcoholic. According to tradition, he was paid not in cash but in bottles of whisky for each piece. The messenger of Oudh Punch used to come to him with a bottle of whisky and Ratan Nath Dhar used to write while sipping pegs. He wrote four volumes of Fasana Azad, and the amount of alcohol he must have consumed is anybody’s guess. His mastery of the Urdu idiom and dialogues of butlers, begums and courtiers is remarkable for its authenticity. His humour and wit is there for all to see. His characters are as well drawn as of Dickens and Fasana Azad is akin to Pickwick Papers.

“The last great Kashmiri poet was Brij Narain Chakbast, who died at the young age of 44, in 1926. His poetry is full of patriotic fervour, and is devoid of love and romance. Chakbast was an ascetic and a liberal in politics like Sir Tej. But Chakbast was master of diction, idioms and the classical Luknavi Urdu.

Our own time

“In our own day, Pandit Anand Narain Mulla, a former judge of the Allahabad High Court and an M.P., is a poet of standing.

“Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru’s services to the cause of Urdu literature are too well known. Raja Sir Kishen Prasad Kaul, of the erstwhile State of Hyderabad, was a great patron of the Urdu poets. Among the lesser known poets, one can mention Amar Nath Madan ‘Sahir’ and Tribhuvan Nath ‘Hijar’.

In the Valley itself, Kashmiris have served the cause of Urdu literature well. Nand Lal Kaul Talib, Dina Nath Mast and Nand Lal ‘Begarz’ are well known names, among many.”

Z.L.Kaul, Kashmiri Pandits A Cultural Heritage, Vitasta, Calcutta (1998-99)

30

Superstitions & Beliefs

When you feel like sneezing, it gives a micro second warning and then you hear the explosion. If it is repeated it is a coincidence. More than that it becomes a cold or an affliction.

But the sneeze has a place in a belief. If one sneezes, he says, “Someone is thinking about me, someone is remembering me”. Some say that it is true if the person who is supposed to have remembered this sneezer then it is publicized as proven fact. Whatever the veracity, sneezing has its own message.

Why is a sneeze considered a bad omen in some cultures and blessing in others?

A sneeze is forcible expulsion of air from the mouth and nose in an explosive, spasmodic, involuntary action, caused by irritation in the nose. In some cultures, sneezing is considered as a precursor to the catching of a cold and subsequent illness, ie., a bad omen. In such cases, witnesses to the sneeze say, “jiyo” (India), god bless (UK), gesundheit or good health (Germany), etc.

However, other cultures consider a sneeze to be a good omen because they claim that the sneezer is throwing out evil spirits from his or her body. This is partially true since germs are expelled from the body when one sneezes. Hence good or bad depends entirely on one’s point of view. Same as breaking of a mirror is considered a bad omen in some cultures and as a blessing in others.

If this were not enough, try this.

You are sitting, suddenly you feel like scratching the heel of your foot or the bottom or the base of your foot. If you get it, you scratch it with your hand. After a while things get back to normal.

Fallout: you will get an unexpected windfall of fortune. No one knows how far this is true.

Avoiding misfortune and thereby going about your own business. When a person embarks on a journey, he wants to complete it successfully and safely. The moment he is ready to leave the house, the youngest daughter in the family is asked to go out into the street and to pass him in front of the house on his left side. It is made out as if she was coming into the house and he was going out of the house. It is believed that only a girl should do it and this prevents any misfortune falling on the traveller.

This is called in Kashmiri “Zangi Yun”. Zang means leg and the idea is that they walk with the legs and then cross each other.

If the scratch on the heel of your foot is not enough, try now this for size.

When your left eye starts twitching, then it means something bad might happen. But some say it also means good luck. So watch out for both.

Peculiar Customs- If anyone leaves his house first thing in the morning and an old, ugly woman, or a one eyed person, or a dog or donkey happen to come from the opposite direction, the unfortunate person will have either to retrace his steps or pass the time in great anxiety, fearing some misfortune. Educated men pay no attention to this nonsense, or pretend that they do not.

Pund or Sneeze- Superstitious persons will never begin to do anything if someone sneezes. Rogues sometimes sneeze on purpose, in order to annoy others. They quietly put a straw into their noses and sneeze.

Crows, owls and kites are ominous birds, while bulbuls and swallows considered fortunate. The bulbul is considered to be the messenger bird; its chirp is supposed to foretell some guest.

When a person falls seriously ill, the patient's relatives take a vow to offer a sacrifice, and a fat lamb is brought before the priest, who lays the sins of the patient on it. It is then either killed or set free in some forest. The latter is very rare, though preferred to the former. This sacrifice is called "Raja Kat". (Tyandale Biscoe, Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade, 1922).

At night, when you are sleeping, you hear a dog howling. It is the sign of a bad luck. Many a housewife has opened the window and thrown a stone at the dog to make him stop howling. Apart from that, she would have used her vast vocabulary to curse the animal. Poor animal, whose luck?

Modern medicine has devised methods to combat small pox, but in traditional society, it is believed that the arrival of small pox among the children is an expression of anger of the Devi. Her anger lasts approximately ten days which the scientists and doctors also say is the period needed for curing it. With the puja and devotion the Devi forgives and the patient recovers.

This writer also underwent the process of requesting the Devi to forgive when he was five years old.

Ask any doctor and he will tell you. For solid food to go down a person's gullet, it should be wet. Today, when the doctor with M.B.B.S ,M.D,F.R.C.S, tells you to drink a glass of water before eating your meals, you will readily obey him.

Centuries ago, the ritual for eating was that before eating you poured a little water in the hollow of your right palm and drank it. You will not believe it that the reason was not

religious but scientific. Our forefathers knew more science than we do because they developed original concepts, but we only copy the West.

Among the customs related to washing and bathing, washing your feet had a procedure which required one to wash the right foot first. It is peculiar that among the Kashmiri Pandits it was called “Khor Sorshavun”. Khor means foot, Sorshavun is the verb for washing and it is clear that it has a Sanskrit root. Interestingly, Muslims of Kashmir used to describe the same process as “Khor Pathravun”. Talk of diversity.

When one wants to go on a journey or start a new job one usually looks for an auspicious time to begin the proceedings. In Southern India, the concept of Rahu Kalam and Yamakhand Kalam is quite well known. The formula is simple, avoid the bad times which are given and the rest will be okay. Apart from the time, the day is also important. You will notice that in the whole of India Tuesday is taboo for most things among which is a haircut. That is why in almost all cities of India barbers observe Tuesday as their weekly holiday.

In Kashmir, among the Pandits too they had such beliefs and have carried them along to wherever they have gone. The only difference with the rest of India is that instead of identifying the bad time or the bad day, they identify the good day. In Kashmiri, it is called “saath wuchin”. Quite often the family priest or astrologer would be consulted.

All over India, whenever a religious function is held and puja conducted, the devotees line up to receive the tika on their forehead (the vermilion mark). The ritual further extends. Devotees hold out their right hand with their palm facing upwards as the priest ties a saffron coloured thread around the right wrist. Thereafter, the man holds his palm and receives teertha in his right hand.

Why right hand? One can see very often even today when children are guided by their parents to receive blessings in the form of the thread which in Kashmiri is called **Narvun**, the children in their confusion sometimes hold out their left hand which is promptly and sternly corrected by the parents. They are told only to hold out their right hand. As a child, I have had my knuckles rapped for holding out my left hand.

The belief is that in most people that the right hand and the arm attached to it is the working hand. And the left hand is the auxiliary system to support the right hand. There are left – handed people, but since they are in a minority, they do not seem to be a prescription for them. Of course, it is also believed that it is auspicious to receive money with the right hand and when you feel a scratching sensation in the palm of your hand, you will receive unexpected money.

Now can anybody explain this riddle? If you do not believe me try and pay money or salary to an employee and see how horrified he will be if you take it or give it with your left hand. Three cheers for the right hand.

There are many more, but the message is clear. Win, lose or draw, such beliefs cannot easily be brushed off.

31

Sites Of Pandit Heritage

The whole of Kashmir Valley is dotted with heritage sites of Kashmiri Pandits, the original inhabitants of the Valley. From Amarnath cave to Ganapatyar and from Keer Bhawani to Verinag it is a mosaic of religion, philosophy, architecture, engineering and breathtaking beauty.

Some of the prominent ones are Martand, Bijibar, Avantipur, Anantnag, Amarnath, Pandrenthan, Hariparvath, Shankarcharya, Ganapatyar, Rugnath Mandir, Kali, Manasbal, Mattan and Verinag.

“**Pampur** is a corruption of Padma-Pur the city of Vishnu, or of Padman-pur, or “the place of beauty”, from the beauty of its inhabitants in former days, though I am not aware that it enjoys any pre-eminence of the kind at present (1835). There are numerous grades of female beauty recognized by the Hindus, and of these the Padmini, or such as are graceful as the lotus, are considered to hold the first rank.

She is thus defined by Abu Fuzl: “Padmini, an incomparable beauty, with a good disposition; she is tall, and well proportioned, has a melodious tone of voice, talks little, her breath resembles a rose, she is chaste and obedient to her husband,” &c. But the Oriental says that a genuine Padmini is rarely to be met with now *1. Pampur, or Padma-pur, was the scene of a great battle in the reign of Chacra Verma, A.D.956.

At **Kakurpur**, a village under the Karywah, or elevated plain of Pampur, is an old ruined Hindu temple. The geologist, however, would be better repaid than the antiquarian, by observing the long ridges of limestone strata on which the Karywah is supported, jutting out perpendicularly to a height of thirty or forty feet in some places, close to the river, and on the north side, and which is consequently nearly the lowest limestone in the valley. I know of no other place where it appears in the open plain, and have noticed it in my remarks on the geology of the valley.

Following up the river towards Pampur, we arrive at an orchard and a garden planted in the olden time, and which is now a picturesque place, carpeted with greensward, and shaded by the fine chunars that overhang the river.

The bridge of Pampur is built precisely like that at Bij Beara, but has a few more arches, if arches they may be called. The river, which has been flowing towards the north, takes a larger sweep to the eastward, and Pampur stands upon the northern bank. It is a town containing few gardens, and about three hundred houses, and is nowise remarkable, excepting for the beauty of the wood-work in the mosques.

The plain of Pampur is an open down without trees, and commands a beautiful and extensive view of the Valley. The scenery in front of it is such, that, when the mountains are enveloped in mist, I might have fancied myself in English fields surrounded by

hedge-rows. But whilst the beauty of the mountain scenery can hardly be exceeded, the general appearance of the flat open plains of Kashmir would sometimes rather remind me of parts of France or Holland, as rows of poplars often do duty for hedges. There are three or four small shallow and sedgy lakes in the neighbourhood of the town.”

“Still nearer to the city is the very remarkable building of **Pandrenton**. The building at Pandrenton stands in the centre of a small pond, three sides of which are encircled by a grove of willows, and overshadowed on the other by some fine chunars. It is small, square-sided, hollow edifice, of limestone, with an opening on each side, shaped like the arches at **Martand**. The water is about four-and-a-half feet in depth, above the waist of a man whom I sent into the interior to see if there was any inscription. On its pyramidical shape I have already remarked, and it would appear that the erection of these buildings in water is meant as a special compliment to the Deity, by which he is more honoured, and better pleased; whilst the edifice itself is rendered still more holy, by its resting, as it were, upon the bosom of the blessed element, and being thus brought as nearly as possible into contact with the God to whose name it was raised and consecrated.

“The Hindu ruins in the city are composed chiefly, if not entirely, of large rectangular blocks of limestone, similar to those I have before noticed at Mar-Tund and other places. The largest I know of is at Shurji-bul, consisting of two platforms raised one above another, one of twenty yards square lying on another of forty-four yards by sixty-eight. The height of this enormous mass of stone-work, which no doubt once supported a temple of proportionate size, is now about twenty-four feet.

The massive edifices which they once composed could never have fallen to the ground, unless they had been forcibly displaced. We must suppose them to have been overthrown by the bigoted zeal of Sikundur Butshekun (A.D. 1396), and consequently infer that their remains were employed for the construction of the walls and ghats on either side of the river, by some Musalman king who reigned subsequently to the last-mentioned date; or perhaps the walls form the Mahapadma Saras, built by Sujya to confine the Vitasta or Jylum.

Sujya also constructed the dykes and canals in the Valley. The river in passing through the city has been thus narrowed to a width of about eighty yards; an immovable barrier is opposed to expansion, and its stream is consequently more rapid and deeper than in any other part of the valley. Eight or ten feet may be its average depth in ordinary seasons, but in the city it is increased in some places to fourteen or fifteen, and it rushes under the bridges with considerable force.

V.T.Vigne from “Travels in Kashmir, Ladakh ,Iskardo”,1880.

Anantnag is situated on the westward of, and under, a hill which rises to the height of about 350 feet above it, and commands an exquisite view of the plain and the mountain at the southern end of the valley. It is formed, as I have before remarked, of thin strata, of fine grey, mountain limestone, and having a quantity of shingly conglomerate, the remains of a beach, adhering to the steep that fronts the town.

From its foot flows the holy fountain of Anat Nag, and its first waters are received into tanks whose sides are built up with stone, embellished with a wooden pavilion, and overshadowed with large chunar-trees; and around them are numerous idlers, Kashmirians, Sikh soldiers, Hindu fakirs, and dogs, reposing in the enjoyment of a cool air and delicious shade.

In the evening two or three aged Pandits were to be seen making their way to the place near which the spring issues from under the rock, and afterwards kneeling over the water, and mumbling their prayers, as their fathers had done before them, by the glare of lighted pieces of split pine, which answers all the purposes of a torch, in consequence of the large quantity of turpentine which it contains.

The formation of the fountains of Anantnag is attributed to Vishnu or Narayan, whilst that of Verinag was produced by a blow from the trident of Shiva.

V.T.Vigne, Travels of Kashmir, Ladakh, Iskardo", 1880.

Ganpatyar

In Srinagar we have a prominent temple of Ganesa in the heart of the city. I was formerly under the management of the Dharmarth Trust, but is now managed by a local managing committee. An annual festival on Vaisakha Sukla Chaturdasi is held in the premises of the temple, and a mahayajna by the Brahman Maha Mandal is performed on the Brahma Jayanti day.

There is a legend that during the period of the Pathan rulers, Several hundred years back, the original idol of Lord Ganesa had been submerged in the Vitasta by the Pandits to save it from desecration. During the Dogra rule the idol was reclaimed by the devotees and installed on the Vaisakha Sukla Chaturdasi in the temple. This ancient idol placed in the outer temple by the side of the Siva lingam, and two bigger and more attractive idols, most probably donated by Dogra rulers, are in the main temple.

There is another important temple of Lord Ganesa at the foot of the hillock of **Hari Parbat** which every Hindu considers it his sacred duty to go round everyday. Lord Ganesa's temple is the first amongst the shrines strewn on this hillock.

Visnu: The only holy place connected with Lord Visnu in Kashmir is Vishnu-Pada or **Kaunsar Naga**. This is a big lake situated at a height of more than 14,000 feet in

Anantnag district. The lake is shaped like a foot and it is believed that Lord Visnu had placed his holy foot in the place where the present big lake is found.

Amarnath : The natural cave with its huge ice Siva Lingam is the most famous centre of pilgrimage in Kashmir.

Vetha – Vatur : Here is the source of river Vitasta. Annual pilgrimage to this place is performed on the thirteenth day of the dark half of the Bhadra month.

Khana Barni : Dedicated to Divine Mother, it is near Qazigund.

Kapal Mochan : Annual festival on Sravana Sukla Dvadasi is held here and devotees perform sraddha. It is situated near Shopian.

Manzgam : A temple in the forest, dedicated to Mother Rajna. Annual festival is held on Jyestha Astami.

Anantnag : This holy spring after which the town as well as the district is named, is famous for its crystal clear water. Annual festival of Ananta Devata is held on the fourteenth day of the dark half of Bhadra month.

Tajiwore : It is situated near Bijbihara. An old Siva temple is found here and the annual festival is held on Sravana Purnima.

Gautama Nag : It is situated at about 4 ½ km away from Anantnag.

Lokabhawan : Annual festival is held here and a mahayajan performed. It is 11 miles from Anantnag.

Uma Nagari : A temple and spring of Goddess Uma is found here. Annual mahayajna is performed here.

Nagadandi : Sri Ramakrishna Maha Sammelan, managed by the Vivekananda Rock Memorial Committee of Kanyakumari, is situated here. An ancient spring and a few idols of some ancient temple are found here. An annual festival is held on the day Chhari (Amarnath pilgrimage) starts. It is 3 km away from Achhabal.

Gosayeen Gond : An attractive neat and clean Ashram is found here. During Amarnath Yatra a number of devotees visit this Ashram and stay and meditate for a few days.

Vishnu Pad : Known also as Kunsarnaga, it is about 14 miles away from Aharbal fall; the journey to it is hazardous.

Jwala Mukhi : This tirtha dedicated to Goddess Jwala (Flame) is situated about 20 km from Srinagar in Anantnag district. A temple of Jwalaji is situated on a hillock there. Annual festival is held in Jwala – Caturdasi (fourteenth day of the dark second half of Asad).

Kurkshetra : It is near Pampore (famous for saffron, where the great mystic poetess of Kashmir, Lalleshwari or Lalded, lived). Festivals are held here on occasions of solar and lunar eclipses.

Baladevi : This famous tirtha is dedicated to Bala Bhagavati (Tripurasundari). She is the family deity of the Dogra rulers, and the temple is managed by the Dharmarth Trust. This place of pilgrimage is situated Balahama near Pampur.

Northern Kashmir

Koti Tirth: It is situated on the right bank of the Vitasta (Jhelum) at Baramulla. It is believed that the holy waters of one crore tirthas reach here through the Vitasta and is therefore considered very sacred.

Shailaputri (Devibal) : This tirtha is situated on the left bank of the Vitasta at Baramulla. This is a miniature Ksheer Bhawani.

Nandkeshwar (Seer- Jagir): A famous temple of Siva known as Nandakeswar Bhairava, situated on the left bank of the Vitasta at Sopore. The annual festival is held on Jyestha Amavasya here.

Nandkeswar (Sumbai) :An ancient place for worship of Nandakeswar Bhairava situated in Sumbai village.

Gophabal : Situated near Langet, Handwara.

Bhadrakali : This Tirtha dedicated to Goddess Kali is situated in a thick pine forest near Vadipora (Handwara).

Takar (Gushi) : Situated in the picturesque Valley of Lolab in Sogam. A monastery of Sannyasins belonging to the Niranjani Akhada has been established here.

Gosayeen Teng : Situated on a hillock at Baramulla. Some springs dedicated to Bhagavan Sri Ramachandra are found here.

District Srinagar

Hari Parbat : A hillock in Srinagar city, it has many temples around it. The main temple is of Goddess Sarika, the presiding Deity of Kashmir. Annual festival on the first Navaratri and Asadha Navami are held here. This is considered a Siddha Pitha, a place of awakened Divine Presence.

Ksheer Bhawani : Twenty kilometers away from Srinagar, it is a spring in which a temple has been constructed dedicated to Mother Rajani. Annual festival is held on Jyesta Astami.

Shankaracharya Hill : A beautiful Siva temple exists on the hillock called Shankaracharya Hill. Annual festival on the day of Amarnath Darshan is held here.

Adi Shankaracharya

The one constant reminder of the unity of India is the Shankaracharya Temple that overlooks the Dal Lake in Srinagar, a landmark that shows the invisible thread of a link between the North and the South.

“Adi Shankaracharya, a great philosopher and a saint of high order, re-established true faith in Upanishadas and gave Vedanta philosophy a right footing. He visited Kashmir in the first quarter of 9th century (788-820 A.D). Pt.N.K.Kotru in Shivastotravali of Utpaladeva mentions that when Buddhism was dominating in India, the great Shankaracharya launched a vigorous campaign in the South and popularized the cult of Bhakti to reduce the influence of Buddhist domination. He had a sweeping tour of the country and defeated Buddhist scholars with his powerful logic. He checked the tidal wave of nihilism (denial of all reality), says the writer in The Life of Swami Vivekanada.”

Gangabal : A lake situated near Harmukh peak ; it is the most beautiful lake in Kashmir. Annual festival is held on the Ganga Astami in Bhadra month. People immerse the ashes of their dead relatives here and also perform Sraddha. The journey to this place is most hazardous but is much rewarding.

Guptaganga (Nishat) : Just adjacent to the Nishat garden. On the Vaisakhi festival devotees come from all over Kashmir to have a dip in the spring here. A saiva math is also attached to it where a Sunday classes on Saivism were conducted by the well-known teacher Swami Lakshman Joo.

Jyeshtheshwara : A temple of Jyestha Devi is located in between Shanikaracharya Hill and Chasma Shahi. A pilgrimage to this place on Thursdays in the month Jyestha is considered auspicious.

Gangajatan : Situated in the tehsil of Badgam. On Ganga Astami day people come here to have a dip. It is almost a dry spring but on this particular day, at a particular hour, water gushes out and devotees have their holy bath.

Badipu : Sitated in the tehsil Chadura near Nagam, it is a miniature Ksheer Bhawani. Annual mahayajna on Vaisakha Sukla Astami is held here.

Mahakali Asthapan : Situated by the side of the famous Khanaqah of Shah Hamdan; it is believed that a magnificent temple of Maha Kali once existed here. The annual festival is held here on Pausa Krsna Paksa Astami.

Vaskur : Dedicated to the mystic poetess Rupa Bhavani, considered to be an incarnation of Goddess Sarika. Annual festival is held here on Sahib – Saptami, the seventh day of the dark fortnight of Magha.

Vichar Nag : Situated on Srinagar – Leh Highway at a distance of about 10 km from Srinagar. The annual festival is held on Caitra Amavasya, the last day of the Kashmiri calendar.

The famous Kashmiri Pandit, Shriya Bhat, responsible for the change of heart of Sultan Zain Alabudin, later know as Budshah (the Great Monarch), lived here.

Prabuddha Bharata, March 1983 (Prof.Chaman Lal Sapru, Koshur Samachar, February 1999).

Ganderbal : Located 20 k.m North-West of Srinagar and situated on the banks of river Sendh which is a tributary of river Jhelum which it meets of Ganderbal at Sangam (called Prayag). Prayag is an island temple where “Shrad” ceremonies and kumbh mela festivals are held by the Hindus. There is a garden park on the banks of the river Sendh which is part of Ganderbal. A good picnic spot which was famous for camping before 1947.

Tulmul/Tula Mula : This is a famous spot very close to Ganderbal (4-6 km away) which is the location of Kheer Bhavani temple of the Hindus and the shrine of a Muslim saint Kumar Baba Sahib. Thousands of Hindus gather at this shrine on Jyeth Ashtami (May – June) every year. On every 8th day of the lunar month (bright half) also, Hindus pray at the shrine with devotion. The spring at the shrine changes colours and people ascribe astrological Predictions to the colours. The Urs at Kumar Baba shrine is another great occasion at Tulmul. Lots of Muslims gather to sing and pray at the shrine. Mela lasts three to four days and lot of feasting is associated with the mela. It is a Sufi celebration. Hindus also pray at the shrine.

Mattan : It is situated five k.m or away from Anantnag on way to Pahalgam. The village has a large presence of Hindu families, earlier about 200, which is at present (2002) reduced to about 19 families. They are indeed the custodians of the Mattan temple which is located at the head of a lovely natural spring. People (Hindus & Sikhs) feed the fish in the rectangular pond surrounding the temple. There is also a Sikh gurudwara in the premises to meet the needs of Sikh populace who live in Mattan and nearby villages.

Shadipur : A town famous for the nearness of the holy prayag of the Hindus. It is a town approachable from Ganderbal as well from Srinagar and the Srinagar road. In former times when people would go to Tulmul in a dhoonga , Shadipur was the main stop out from Tulmul. The picnic with mutton and rice would begin here because in the upstream area up to Tulmul meat eating was forbidden.

Verinag : A town known for its garden and spring which is the of river Jhelam. The historic Mughal garden and masonry enclosure of the spring has been got built by Emperor Jehangir. Many Hindus live in this village through not many at present.

Shalimar : A famous Mughal garden about 12 k.m from Srinagar. It is located on the banks of the famous Dal Lake. A very small presence of Hindus around Shalimar.

Pahalgam : First stop for doing a pilgrimage to holy cave of Amarnath. A picnic spot of great beauty. Lots of hutments built for the tourist. Also famous for ancient temple of Lord Mamleshwar situated atop a lovely spring. Trtekking to Liddar, Chandanwadi, & other peaks possible from here.

Khanabal : A small town on the road going to Jammu. It is at Khanabal that the Srinagar Jammu highway (National Highway – IA) forks out, one goes to Jammu via Qazigund, the other goes to Anantnag and Pahalgam.

Gulmarg : The meadow of flowers is a hill station at 8000 feet from the sea level north west of Srinagar, about 50 km from there. Famous for its mini – golf course, a Gongola for tourists. In winter when there is enough snow on its slopes, the spot becomes famous for skiing & related sports.

Baramulla : A trading town of North Kashmir situated at 54 km from Srinagar on the Jhelam Valley Road going from Srinagar to Uri on the line of control (Loc) with POK (Pakistan Occupied Kashmir). Became famous during October 1947, when the Pakistani raiders mercilessly hanged Mohd. Maqbool Sherwani, resident of Baramulla for upholding secular values and resisting the raiders, who had indulged in massacre of Hindus, Sikhs and Christians, loot and arson and rape of nuns in the St. Joseph's Hospital in the town. Today Baramulla is a strong defence at post of Northern Kashmir. Large Hindu & Sikh presence famous Devibal temple on river Jhelum.

Sopore : Apple town of Kashmir. It is called “Chotta London” for its prosperity resulting from high income from apples. In post 1990 scenario, Sopore became a hot bed of militant activity with a strong presence of Jamaat-I-Islami. Lots of Hindus lived in Sopore and in nearby villages but all had to leave behind their orchards and homes in their effort to save their lives and honour. So vicious was the attack on human lives that many Hindus and Muslims alike were murdered ruthlessly. A Hindu female was cut into a pieces on a band saw! Many Muslims were hanged from trees with their eyes gouged out!!

Kupwara : Capital town of Kupwara district in the North of Srinagar. Army Head Qrs. Of great importance for control of infiltration from POK . Kupwara also is a gateway to the famous Lolab valley which is famous for its pristine beauty and unexploited wealth by way of tourist trade and visits.

Qazigund : Seventy two km from Srinagar towards south on the National Highway I – A from Srinagar to Jammu. Tourists traveling to and fro from Srinagar halt here to buy apples, walnuts, almonds, and bats, the village has many Sikh and Hindu families who have lands and shops.

Ganihal : As we move on from Qazigund to Jammu, we cross the Jawahar Tunnel, then the road descends down to the Banihal town (about 18 km from the tunnel). It is a meeting point of Jammu & Kashmir as it were. Kashmiri language ends here and Pahari & Dogri take over from here.

Historic Landmarks

Kashmiri Pandits found persecution almost mitigated during the reign of Zain – ul-abidin (1420-70) who left no stone unturned to rehabilitate them. This change was brought in him by Shri Bhat, a learned Brahmin and physician, who cured the kind of a deadly disease.

The king desired the Brahmin to ask for something precious for the service rendered. Shri Bhat told the king that he had no need for anything except that his brethren devastated, killed and scattered be rehabilitated and allowed to preach and practice their religion without any hitch or hindrance. The king granted his wish and was true to his birth the passing away of Sultan Zain-ul-abdin a most obnoxious period of intrigues and conspiracies prevailed in Kashmir, which culminated in the ascendancy of the most intolerant shia regimes.

During Moosa Rana's reign of terror, some reign 40,000 Kashmiri pandit families were converted Shiaism. The rite of circumcision of converted to Kashmiri pandits performed on a mass scale at Idgah ground in Srinagar. Almost every Shiatie converted Kashmiri pandit during the rule of Chaks Kashmir came under the grip of a terrible famine in 1576-78 in which half of the population died.

Koshur Samachar.

The Legend Of Kheer Bhavani

There is legend about the origin of Kheer Bhavani which is called by Kashmiri Pandits in the local Kashmiri language “ Tula Mula”. It concerns the deity who is worshipped there. At the time of the war which Lord Rama waged against Ravana, the presiding deity in his temple was known by the name *Tripur Sundari*,

Prior to the outrage which Ravana committed by forcibly taking away Sita, this deity was installed and worshipped in Ravana's palace. When the incident took place and war was imminent, the Goddess chided Ravana and despite the latter's pleading left Lanka for the Himalayas.

While winging her way on celestial power she decided to descend on a beautiful little island surrounded by water and vegetation in the land of Kashyp Rishi namely the Kashmir Valley. It needs to be mentioned here that while she was in the form of Tripur Sundari it was the custom to eat flesh and quite often offerings of meat were put before the goddess during pooja.

When she alighted in Kashmir she decided to become a vegetarian and for the devotees give them a clear-cut picture by naming herself Kheer Bhavani. As all of us know Kheer is a vegetarian sweet dish comprising rice, milk and sugar. Hence the name.

However, in the celestial scheme of things, every goddess or god has to have his or her specific name. In the case of Kheer Bhavani she was named *Raegna Bhagawati*. The legend was born, the tradition was built and it has been carrying on for thousands of years.

Some things do not change. Tradition is the anchor and Kheer Bhavani will be with us always.

Ancient Monuments of Kashmir

R.C. Kak, 1933, London, 1971, India.

Monuments of Kashmir represent the past history and ethos of the people of Kashmir. With a fast changing world society, there is universal awareness to preserve old monuments. The UNESCO has also taken interest to preserve global monuments. It is of national interest for India to protect old monuments including temples and mosques in Kashmir. The book by late **Ram Chandra Kak** is a priceless piece of literature about the monuments of Kashmir. It deserves our utmost attention in the modern context.

Kak was a brilliant scholar and administrator. He rose to the position of the Prime minister of Jammu & Kashmir state before the partition of India. He wrote this book in London in 1933, 70 years ago. The book has an introduction by Sir Francis Younghusband. Kak is perhaps among the first few individuals from Kashmir who ventured to go to London and study archaeology and specialise on the monuments of Kashmir.

In the introduction to the book. Professor Foucher says that his researches have “thrown light on the obscure period of Kashmir art before the sixth century A.D. “What surprises us most in this book is that its author is a pure Kashmiri”? Professor Foucher refers to the works of Sir Aurel Stein who has high praise for the creative abilities of the Pandits of Kashmir valley, the book on monuments by Kak is an exceptional work indeed.

About Kak he writes: “It seems almost miraculous that, after a single generation, one of their (Pandits) descendants is able to write in English a work so impartial and so judiciously critical on the antiquities of his country”. Foucher elucidates further : “But the miracle is explained – first by the exceptional intellectual qualities of the race, then by the excellent teaching now offered at the Government College of Srinagar, affiliated to the Punjab University...”

Kak wrote his treatise in a free and impartial manner. He had no inhibitions of the present politics of the sub-continent. The book has about 29 photographs of various historical places. These include Mansabal lake, Pahalgam valley, Sankaracharya, Khangah of Shah Hamdan, Shalimar Bagh, Harwan Pandrehan Temple etc.

He describes the architectural styles of Kashmir. There are not many pre-Christian monuments found in Kashmir. The medieval architecture 600-1300 A.D. includes Buddhist and Hindu buildings. Martand and Avantisvami temples represent the Hindu art. Sankaracharya temple, according to Kak, is made by Hindus in honour of Siva during the tolerant reign of Jahangir and the constructing was sopped on the date 1659 . Other important Hindu temples are Hari Parbat, Patan, Kother, Loduv, Pandrethan.

Kak cites another write Catrou who published a book-History of Mughal Empire in 1708 AD. – and said that Kashmiris are descended from the Jews (p. 75). Catrou says that “Moses is a very common name there; the ruins of an edifice built on a high mountain is called at this day the Throne of Solomon.”

He describes Pandretan, an ancient temple, which is situated 3 miles on Srinagar-Anantnag road. Then there is a temple at Pampur founded in the 9th century by Padma. Another site is Loduv which is not far from Pandrethan. Awantipore has another monument, Avantiswani Temple which is 18 miles from Srinagar on way to Anantnag. Near Awantipore are other historical monuments of Payer, Narasthan, Martand. Other temples above Srinagar include Bumazuv near Bavan, Achhaval, Kother, Namad and Vernag.

Monuments below (North) Srinagar Parihasapura situated 14 miles from Srinagar on the Baramula Road. Patan has 3 temples. Ushkar or Wushkar temple is situated near Baramulla. Other temples described by Kak are Fathgarh ner Baramulla, Naranthal about 2 miles from Baramulla, Feroizpur near Tang Marg. Manasbal lake has a temple which is partially submerged. Wular Lake was known in ancient times as Mahapadmasaras (lake of Mahapadma), the serpent deity. Kak adds that in ancient time there was a city at the very place where there is the Wular Lake nowadays. The city was presided over by the snake deity, Mahapadma. On the northeastern shore of Wular Lake is Garur which has a small medieval temple. I would like to add to this long list of temples the one in Klaus, Bandipore on the bank of Wular Lake called Sharada temple. Wangah is another ancient monument on Srinagar- Sonamarg Road near Wusun.

Prof S. Bhatt

32

Tomorrow Is Forever

From Pen To Theodolite & Byte

The professional profile of a community, especially as small as the half a million Kashmiri Pandits community, can tell a lot about the value system and professional preference of the community. Because of the physical limitations of the venturing beyond the mountain borders of the Valley and the peace that prevailed in the Valley from 1846 to 1947, no one was interested in leaving the Valley, even for a short while to professionally qualify himself.

For five generations (in historic terms one century produces five generations each comprising and spanning twenty years), simultaneously, with the setting up of the Dogra rule and improvement in transport and communications, Kashmiri Pandits began to take interest in the rest of the world, which initially was India and more than that the province of Punjab being the closest by virtue of the Jhelum Valley Road, which took the traveller from J & K to Rawalpindi in British India.

Until 1947, there were very few Pandits who were either doctors or engineers or even higher education teachers like lecturers and professors. Although the word “Karkun” means a person who has a skill, it was for purposes of the Pandits, the skill to wield a pen but not a screwdriver or a hammer.

Those few, who did go out to qualify themselves through higher education, invariably went to Lahore or Lucknow or Allahabad or Aligarh. Most of them studied humanities and the few who could be counted on a finger tips also studied medicine or engineering in the northern India.

Out of these few, even a fewer number went aboard mostly to U.K for furthering their expertise. In this, the doctors took the lead. While in North India outside Kashmir, many of them came into contact with those Pandits who had been victims of persecution in the Valley during Aurangzeb’s time and the Afghan rule and migrated to British India, and other princely states in North India.

It must be conceded that considering their small number compared to those in the Valley, they did exceedingly well in the services, although here too the Karkun mentality prevailed. Most of the plains Kashmiri Pandits joined either the ICS if they could or the provincial services or the various departments of the judicial profession. Even in civil service the preferred general administration, revenue, judicial and education.

Meanwhile, in the Valley, the doctors who returned, got good appointments and gradually they became objects of admiration and emulation within the community. Thus the horizons of the young men widened and they began to move away from the B.A and M.A mentality. The catalyst for this was the availability then of science courses in the

S.P. and Amar Singh colleges. In fact, according to N.N.Moza, for the first time in 1938 eight Pandits boys graduated with the B.Sc degree.

Thus a slow kind of dispersal of interest with a widening choice of profession began and as the freedom movement neared independence, the community realized that under popular rule, Pandits would not get any more jobs as they were getting earlier. Besides this, the number of Muslims by 1947, going in for English education had increased and subconsciously, Pandits began to search for fresh avenues outside Kashmir to qualify themselves professionally.

Leaving aside the Pakistani aggression of 1947, Kashmir also went through a tremendous expansion of economic activity after independence and the watershed was the first Five Year Plan. Funds were allotted by the Central Government and schemes were formulated. These in Kashmir mainly centred round roads, buildings, canals, bridges etc. in short there was a huge demand for civil engineers.

At this point of time in the early fifties, a majority of Pandits boys, who would earlier have completed B.A or B.Sc, left at the F.Sc stage and applied for civil engineering courses being offered in various colleges in the country for which the Government of India had reserved certain number of seats for candidates from Kashmir. Since all of them could not get admission to degree courses (B.E), most of the unsuccessful ones went in for two or three year diploma courses.

As there were not enough Muslim candidates in the fifties, most of the posts were filled for the first time by technical graduates and diploma holders from the Kashmiri Pandit community. In fact, there was a rash of such people who were appointed as overseers. This was a post created before 1947 in British India, copied by the princely states and continued in Kashmir even after independence. Today, its equivalent is the Junior Engineer.

This had a cascading affect on social and matrimonial values within the community. Overseers suddenly became favourites of matchmakers and parents of eligible girls as prospective sons-in-law. Thus the old preference for F.A and B.A disappeared and the clerk was replaced by the Overseer – the pen by the theodolite.

In the sixties and seventies, gradually the number of qualified Muslims candidates increased considerably and quite a number of Pandit boys who went out of the Valley to qualify themselves, took up jobs outside Kashmir. Gradually this became a practice. The son leaving for higher education and taking up a job and the parents staying back with the father by then having retired from service. The very first batch of overseers retired in the early eighties and wherever a Pandits retired, the job went to a Kashmiri Muslim candidate.

Thus the exodus was economic driven. It started in 1947 and by the middle eighties, hardly any jobs were available. The Pandits had effectively been thrown out except for the last link – parents and grandparents who lived there, the house and those who still had

a few more years of service left before retirement in the state. The 1989 -90 killings and terrorism was the final push in the plan which in the 20th century began with the 1931 riots inspired and aided by the Punjab Muslim League and abetted by British, Political Department of the Viceroy of India.

Thus in a short span of thirty years, Pandits have moved from being clerks or Karkuns to all aspects of technology, medicine, engineering, electronics and any other field which seems attractive to young men and women. In the fore going, no mention has been made about girls. From the late 40s, there was a tremendous pressure and demand to educate our girls and today one can be proud that they are in practically every field in which boys have done well. Overall, the community has cent percent literacy rate.

The earlier glitter or attraction for Government jobs has totally disappeared since guranteed jobs are no longer in fashion especially with the “Mai Baap Sarkar”. Even the community’s share of IAS and IPS has gone town. Today, it is trade industries and commerce both in India and abroad.The Private sector today is where the action is.

But all said and done, the fascination of the Kashmiri Pandits with the pen today (read computer also) still there. That is why, we find a large number of them working as journalists, writers, artistes, musicians, singers, painters, film actors, authors, theatre personalities and social workers.

It is been a long journey from Karkun to technical professions, but we have made it. All that we now need to do is to maintain our links with one another through our mother tongue and never forgetting our culture, heritage and language. **Aye ti bathe. Orzoo**

Profiles Of The Young

From a community of clerks cocooned in the Valley for generations to becoming a community of technocrats, managers, professionals like doctors and engineers and executives, Kashmiri Pandits travelled a long way in a short span of fifty years and are set to scale greater heights of accomplishment.

A sample survey conducted by the internationally known hydrology expert, civil engineer and educationist, Dr.Omkar Narth Wakhlu has revealed that while the community is on the road to progress in the material field, there is a alarming shortcoming in the field of fine arts and humanities.

Age profile:

Maximum age (male) - 42 years: minimum 25 years
Maximum age (female) - 35 years; minimum 22 years

Males

Age Group :	25-29	30-34	35-39	Over 409	Not given
Percentage of Sample:	25	50	10	4	11

Physical features as evidenced by an important parameter, viz. The height of the person shows that males have heights varying between 157 centimetres (minm) and 180 cms (maxm). The females show a height variation of 150 cms (minm) to 167.5 cms (5'-7") as the maximum.

Educational Qualifications:

These are so varied that, for convenience, these had to be grouped into broad categories as given below:

Educational Level	Males Percentage	Females Percentage
Matric or less	nil	1
I.T.I. Diploma	1	1
B.A./B.Sc./B.Com.	15	8
B.Ed./B.Ed	1	10
B.Sc.(Electronics); M.C.A	11	14
B.Com./DDM.MBA	9	8
B.Engg.;MBA;DCA	30	19
B.Pharm.	nil	1
M.B.B.S.; MD, MS, B.D.S	6	14
M.A.;M.Phil, Ph.D.	7	10
M.Tech.;M.Sc. Engg.	6	nil
Hotel Management	2	1
Foreign Languages	nil	4
Company Secretary	nil	1
Home Science	nil	1

Fashion Design Technology	nil	3
Not Given	12	5

It is evident from this that the percentage of highly qualified persons among both males and females is reassuringly high. However, the sample shows complete absence of persons qualified in the creative and fine arts, humanities, sociology, economics and the like.

It is likely that such persons do not seek their mates through matrimonial advertisement. Even that would be an interesting conclusion if it is supported by further evidence. My apprehension, however, remains that, in our race for getting better jobs and higher wages in the market place internationally, we tend to go for vocational streams at the cost of neglecting humanities and social sciences. Such imbalance is eventually fraught with danger, leading to lack of creativity, values and aesthetic principles and ethics.

Let us now consider the kind of work/professions our prospective brides and bridegrooms are engaged in. This information is also very interesting for our youth.

Work/Profession	Mal es Perce ntage	Fe males Perc entage
Consultant	2	1
Defence Services	2	nil
Doctor/Dental Surgeon	6	14
Engineer	12	6
Govt. Officer/Accounts/Administration	13	14
Executive	10	15
Manager/Sales/Marketing	20	5
Media/Editor	1	1
Medical Representative	5	1
Own Business	14	1
Scholar	1	8
Software/Computer Programmers	14	6
Teacher/Trainer/Lecturer/ Professor	nil	17
Not given	nil	11
Total	100	100

I was quite impressed by the fact that the number of males having own business is a good 14 per cent of the sample. This shows that given the peaceful environment, our youth do show good entrepreneurial spirit. This conforms to what a foreigner. Col. Torrens wrote in 1860: "Thanks to superior education and fitness for business, they were largely employed by the successive conquerors and placed in posts of trust".

Income Levels (combined for females and males)

The income earned by the young persons are of the order of Rs. 5,000 to over Rs. 20,000 per month. The approximate distribution within the sample is as given below:

Rs. 5,000 or less per month	6 per cent
Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 10,000 per month	20 per cent
Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 20,000 per month	48 per cent
Rs. 20,000 per month and above	22 per cent
Income not stated	4 per cent

100

By the country's general standards, a good 70 per cent of the sample are in the higher income bracket. This is a positive sign.

It must be emphasized again that these figures are derived from a very limited sample of those who have access to the advertisements in Koshur Samachar. It does not reflect the true position of the population as a whole for which more representative urban and the refugee sector in many places through out the country.

The next important question I tried to find an answer to was: Where are the people working? The answer to this question is given in the following table:

Location	Percentage of number of Persons
Anywhere in Jammu and Kashmir	10
Outside the State but in the country	83
In the U.S.A., Canada, Gulf and Other foreign countries	7

Obviously, This does not tally with the general impression we all carry that a large percentage of our people are heading abroad. A further analysis of more data is needed to drawn more realistic conclusions.

It also transpired from the analysis of the sample that nearly 20 percent of the samples were working as executives/managers/software professional with multinational companies (MNCs) both in the country and abroad. In an era of

globalization, this trend is quite healthy and encouraging from a materialistic point of view. But the cultural impact of this trend will reveal itself gradually.

Other interesting observations are that, in the whole sample, there were only three cases (two males and one female) who were legally divorced without any children.

Only one person, a female, was studying music and doing a Ph.D. in the subject. There was not a single case of fine arts qualified person in the sample.

The purpose of This brief and revealing study would have been well-served if it helps us in making a wider study of this type for a larger sample of the community with the help of those living abroad as well. That, I sincerely believe, will help in making a SWOT analysis (an assessment of our STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES and THREATS) to enable us to live better and more happily in a highly competitive world in future. That will enable us to create and focus on a shared vision. In this context, it is well to remember the words of Shri P.N. Haksar:

"We are often corrupted by our own cynicism.....Cynicism is an inevitable product of society when it has no purpose, no shared vision. If a society has no shared vision of its own future, it is a fertile ground for cynicism or what I call phlistinism."

(The author has written this piece from his residence in Buchwara, Old Gagribal Road, Srinagar on Vinayak Chaturthi-August 26, 1998.)

Dr. O.N. Wakhlu

Their Assets

When militancy and terrorism began in the Kashmir valley in 1989, and selective killings and murders started hitting the community, which was concentrated in scattered localities of Srinagar and the State Government could not protect the only non-Muslim community in Kashmir valley, the only course left open for the Pandits was to leave en masse. The worst sufferers were those Pandits who lived in the rural areas without any protection.

A few years after the forced migration to Jammu, a housewife who had all her life lived in the Ali Kadal locality, was returning from Sabzi Mandi to go home, when she met a Muslim neighbour from the same locality. The neighbour who had come for a visit, he was in the apple business, and he expressed his sorrow and regret at the housewife's cruel fate. The lady replied:

"No, we have not lost anything that is of everlasting value to us. Yes, no one likes to lose his home and comfort, but all that we have lost are our houses. Houses can be built again but respect and life if lost can't be regained. Wherever we go, we carry our customs, culture and traditions with us. Many of you have dubbed us cowards, but you have heard

the old Kahsmiri proverb that if you cannot fight you should run and live to fight another day'. That is what we shall do. Fight yes, but not with guns."

The only thing that our ancestors taught us is the importance of qualities, which would help us to survive in this turbulent world. One has to use our intelligence to our maximum advantage. The second is to have an education, which would be of help to us to generate employment. And, as the years and generations rolled on, the focus of education shifted from getting a clerkship. The emphasis of change to vocational courses, medical, engineering and sophisticates areas like computer, science, hardware and software is there for all to see.

All the above will not result in success if to intelligence and education one does not add diligence. But by and large most Pandits have done that.

"Leave Or Die"

The British colonized Australia, New Zealand, Africa, America, Canada but they did not colonize India. Why? Because it was already over populated. It was good to have it as colony which would provide the revenue but not good for John Bull to put his roots into India's soil.

The only place that tempted the British to put down their roots and settle down as residents was Kashmir, but alas by the time they got complete control of Punjab as a corridor to Kashmir, they had already sold it to the Dogra dynasty.

The British colonized Rhodesia. It was a piece of Africa and they named it after their most famous adventurer,explorer and businessman,Cecil Rhodes.

At that time, Lord Salisbury was the Foreign Secretary, and so the capital was named Salisbury. In due time, it gained its independence and was given a new name Zimbabwe and the capital changed its name from Salisbury to Harare. Unlike India, British sent out ordinary people such as farmers, miners, drivers and others who worked with their hands to colonize Africa. The greatest concentration was in South Africa but in Zimbabwe a fairly large number of white farmers were left behind after the country got its independence.

An irony of history is the way Robert Mugabe has terrorized the white farmers into leaving by unleashing bands of armed militants on them and killing many in cold blood. In the process, the fear of death has spread as also the fear of their women folk being kidnapped.

There is an uncanny resemblance between what is happening to White farmers in Zimbabwe in 2001-2002 and how Kashmiri Pandits were terrorized by similar selective killings and murders and threats into leaving the Valley in 1989-90.

The following news item will show the resemblance:

“A white Zimbabwean farmer and his family fled their farm early on Friday after invading militants demanded they leave and fired shots at neighbouring farmers who had rushed to the scene.

A group of about 30 militants smashed through the security gate at James Ogden-Brown’s farm near Chegutu, southwest of Harare, and ordered him off the land, said a spokesman for the Commerical Farmers’ Union.

“They told him; “Mr Ogden-Brown...you have 30 minutes to leave. We are taking your farm,” the spokesman said. The group then entered the farmhouse and seized six firearms. As the 35-year-old farmer, his wife Cheryl and their two children packed their belongings, a group of neighbouring farmers arrived on the scene after being alerted by radio.

Some of the militants rushed to the farm gate and opened fire at the farmers who fled. There were no injuries, but one car was hit by shotgun pellets, the CFU spokesman said. The police arrived later, but did not comment on the incident.(Feb.22/,2002)

It was the British virus planted soon after 1846 and nurtured till 1947 that prepared the ground for the eviction of Pandits from the Valley. And even after that, the British are still pro-Pakistani. Hail Britannia.

Looking Ahead

Life is one continuous long line where there is no break. The old ones get off the vehicle of life and the new ones get on. It never stops and so is it with Pandit community.

Only fifty years back, our horizons were limited to the Kashmir Valley. In the last fifty years, there has been tremendous expansion of our activities in terms of movement and settlement. Earlier, the pheran- clad home –grown intellectual would dwell on Pandits outside the Valley, the politics in the valley and the never-ending supply of gossip.

Today, you can find Pandits in practically every state of India and outside India in Britain, Europe, Africa, Middle East, Australia and United States and practically every country in the world. True, the numbers are small but the presence is there.

What will be, in this 21st century, the method by which we shall maintain our connection, our link and thus retain our identity and further it. True, we now have organized ourselves in many places into associations, which maintain our names and addresses. But what about the invisible link that Nehru once called the thread.

In recent times, we have changed our dress for both men and women and to a certain extent our style of living to conform to the environment in which each one of us lives.

But what will and can keep us together and ensure the continuation of our distinct identity.?

The answer to that is language. We have to ensure that our children do not forget Kashmiri. It is true that one has to learn the language of the place where one is living and working. But one should first teach the child its mother tongue. Many communities similar to Pandits ensure that their children learn the mother tongue along with the local language and English.

Today, the situation is bad on the language front. This stems from some kind of a false notion that the child by speaking the local language to his or her parents is somehow superior. This sometimes used to happen when children of Pandits posted outside the Valley came home during vacation and when visiting friends, neighbours and relatives, the mother of the child would proclaim with a superior air: “He does not understand Kashmiri”.

This should not happen. We should forcefully ensure that the child does not lose his mother tongue for no fault of his. Very often, one comes across teenagers who, when you address them in Kashmiri while meeting them, say “ Uncle, I don’t speak Kashmiri, but I can understand little bit.” A bit painful and sad.

Another aspect is about those Pandits who migrated from Mughal times to the end of 19th century who due to force of circumstances, lost their mother tongue. Quite often, when three or four Pandits meet and speak Kashmiri and one of them from Allahabad or Lucknow or Faizabad does not understand the language, he feels embarrassed, while actually the other three should feel that by their action they have excluded him.

Being a such a small community, we should not allow such irritants to come in the way of forging unity among all Pandits. No matter where the Pandit is, whether it is the North Pole or the Sahara, we have to develop a sense of brotherhood in which promoting the language and learning it by those who by force of circumstances have not learnt should be given priority.

It has been rightly observed that the smaller the community, the greater the divisions. It is for this reason that we never had a united multi-tiered leadership. However the modern generation and the younger lot have risen to the occasion and we can hear their voices through the world media.

We lost our numbers by our misplaced sense of purity and exclusiveness. When Rinchen Shah wanted to become a Hindu, we said no. Rigidity has been our bane. Even today, when one partner in a marriage is a non-Kashmiri, we practically throw him or her out of the community. We should not do that. We should instead own the couple because one half is Kashmiri. The word is “*Apnana*”.

This is being written in mid – 2002. Only the future can tell what will happen, but we have to be prepared and make the effort in the name of “*The ashes of our fathers and mothers and the temples of our Gods.*”

Youngsters, go forth.....

Justice Jia Lal Kilam, an icon of our community, a legal luminary, a social reformer and a fearless leader, and author of the most comprehensive book on Kashmiri Pandits has this advice for the younger generation of Kashmiri Pandits.

“There can be no denial of the fact that the Kashmiri Pandits have had a great past, but they should know that too much emphasis on the past alone is not going to do any good to them. They must certainly draw inspiration from the past, but then their approach to the present day problems must be in terms of the modern world. They must equip themselves with a mental outlook that is neither narrow nor sectarian and with a single-minded devotion, unmindful of results, they must offer a relentless battle to all disruptive forces like communalism, parochialism and sectarianism wherever they exist. If they act thus, their future both as a community or as a group of individuals is assured for all time.”

As a post script to Justice Kilam’s advice I (the author) would like to add that the overriding objective of today should be to preserve at all costs our identity no matter who we are or where we are located. We are intelligent, hardworking but we have to ensure that we do not lose our mother tongue, for that is the only link that can keep us together howsoever scattered we might be on this plant earth.

Justice Kilam wrote the above words in 1955 and since then till today (2002) a lot of water has flown down the Vitasta. What he had said is valid today and we have to apply the advice to our changed circumstances, without forgetting the basic tenets of his message and advice.

Shivarathri in exile

The salt of the earth must taste sweet. Particularly when the earth lies in Kashmir and the gift comes to married women from their parents. Three hundred households comprising 2,000 immigrant Kashmiri Pandits in Bangalore and Tumkur re-enact this ritual during ‘Sivarathri’ last week and during some other festive occasions.

Besides a packet of salt, the gift ‘hamper’ that goes by the name of Atgath contains a rupee, a pair of wooden slippers and kangri or firepot. In Kashmir and the surrounding areas at the foot of the Himalayas, the Kangri is used in winter to keep the body warm. The ‘coin’ could be more than one, amounting to thousands and even lakhs depending on the financial status of parents.

The materials that came with the atgath accompanied always reminded the daughter of her parents. What constituted the festival, however, was less important than the moments the parents and their daughters spent together. But Atgath in Bangalore and neighbourhood leaves the Kashmiri migrants wistful. Only the salt packet and the coin remain as vestiges of the original ceremony.

For most of the Kashmiri Pandits who have fled their homeland and settled in pockets across the country for almost a decade, the overriding desire is to return home. In the meantime, they seek to recreate a semblance of the home by clinging to rituals like Atgath.

Back home in Kashmir, it used to be a festival when daughters were invited to maternal homes during 'Shivaratri' and presented with Atgath.

In Bangalore, the ceremony retains most of the original ingredients. For women like Anjali Razdan, it is a poignant reminder of their plight away from their homeland.

Anjali Razdan lives in Bangalore with her in-laws, her mother and children, while her husband stays in Jammu. Her voice quivers as she says, "My husband and I have been living separately the last eight years, he is working in Jammu, I'm here in Bangalore in HMT."

"We are haunted by the fear of losing the Kashmiri race. We are doing everything possible to keep the 5000-year-old tradition alive", says Mr. R.K. Mattoo, president of the Kashmiri Hindu Samithi which was formed in 1992 with the main objective of keeping the scattered community intact and protecting its culture, which they describe as Kashmiriyat.

For centuries Kashmiriyat has provided sustenance for both the Hindus and Muslims of the Valley. The secular ethos of Kashmiriyat even survived the post-Independence trauma. However, the upheaval that the Valley witnessed in the 'Eighties was to threaten Kashmiriyat.

An announcement in 1985 from across the border, "Kashmir has been liberated," sent shockwaves and the Pandit community was on the horns of a dilemma. By the end of 1989, terrorists targeted prominent persons of the community, like H.L. Khera, General Manager HMT, and Prof K.L. Ganjoo and his wife. Mr. Tika Lal Taploo, who was known as "Iron Man of Kashmir" was gunned down on September 14, 1989, which is still observed as Martyr's Day or Balidan Divas. It was high time for the community to think of safety, "When the terrorists set a deadline of March 5, 1990 the only way out was emigrating," says Mr. Rajinder Kaul, former secretary of the Kashmiri Hindu Samiti.

"I had come to Jammu for skin treatment with my husbandwe had little money and few clothes and didn't know where we would finally land up," says Mrs Razdan

describing how her daughter-in-law, Anjali, is now struggling to look after the family which includes her son, in-laws and her mother.

“ I took my wife and son and rode the scooter over 300 km and dropped them in Jammu. Later, I came to Bangalore and stayed in a choultry. I had only one pair of clothes and little money,” says Bharat Rawal with tears trickling down his cheeks. In Bangalore and Tumkur, the Pandits formed the Kashmiri Hindu Samithi to realize their yearning to return home and make life bearable.

Ceremonies like Atgath, Balidan , Divas, Navami homa and Janam Astami gave the community an occasion to relive, however painfully, the Kashmiriyat. Language was the first hurdle they had to overcome. Still, a good number of them now speak Kannada fluently.

Bharat Rawal, who has even appeared in some Kannada plays on Doordarshan says, “we had no problems in getting along with people here.”

With all these efforts, one cannot say that the Kashmiri Pandits have failed to rebuild their fractured existence far away from home. But pockets of emptiness remain in their bosoms and rituals like Atgath might just act as a salve, even as they underline the pathos of their situation.

Savita Hiremath, 21.02.98, Deccan Herald

Falling Numbers

We were once the majority in Kashmir. Persecution, wars, killing and anarchy reduced us to 11 families. We, today's Kashmiri Pandits are the progeny of those brave souls who faced insurmountable odds to survive.

Says Dr.K. Warikoo :

“ The population of Kashmiri Pandits has been reflected inadequately in various census conducted in post-independent India. The 1941 census of J&Kashmir showed the population of Kashmiri Hindus as 76,868 which constituted about 4.5 per cent of 17,28,705 being the total population of Kashmir Division. The 1961 census put the number of Hindus in Kashmir at 89,662, i.e. 4.5 per cent of 19,88,089 being the total population of Kashmir Division. The 1971 census recorded the number of Hindus in Kashmir as 1,11,311 that is 4.57 per cent of the total population of Kashmir Division, which was 24,35,710.

The 1981 Census put the number of Hindus in Kashmir at 1,23,828 being 3.95 per cent of the total population of Kashmir Division (31,34,905). No census was conducted in J&Kashmir State in 1991.

Thus the population of Hindus in Kashmir Division registered only 6.75 per cent decadal growth during 1971-81, as against the growth rate of 27.29 per cent for the Kashmir Division as a whole. This insignificant growth of Kashmiri Hindus cannot be accounted for unless there has been their under-enumeration in the Census operation. Another contributory factor is the lack of interest shown by the Kashmiri Pandit households and the community representative in the census exercise.

When one compares the number of Kashmiri Hindus (1,23,828) as given in the 1981 census of J&Kashmir, with more than 46,000 registered Kashmiri Hindu Migrant families (25,215 families are registered in Jammu Division and the rest are registered in various parts of India outside J&Kashmir State), one can notice the big gap between the enumerated population of Kashmiri Pandits in the 1981 census and the the figures real number. To this we should add around 13,000 Kashmiri Pandit displaced families, who have not been able to register themselves as migrants due to their immobility, ill health, old age, official apathy Pandit families comprising about 300,000 (taking an average of 5 persons per family) are lying dispersed throughout India, after being forced out of their homes and hearths in Kashmir valley.

Epilogue

Almost at the end, one always remembers the beginning, as the old often do living as they are in the evening of their lives. The 49- chapter narrative that was serialized was in a sense a reminder to all of us in the community that we should not forget our roots. Force of circumstance may have driven us out of the valley physically, and attempts are being made to correct the injustice done to us, but let us not forget that time a passing us by. A new generation has been born who have not seen it and by 'it' I mean the ethos of having lived in peace and harmony for more than 101 years in the valley in the recent past.

It is with a sense satisfaction that I recall the years that I spent, living outside the valley, but attempting to put together something in words which would be of interest to the younger and the coming generation of Kashmiri Pandit boys and girls. Knowledge of the past is what makes up for heritage. There is an old saying that bears repetition here:

“The More You Look Back Further Into The Past,
The More You Can Look Farther Into
The Future”

And it is the future that concerns us.

Namaskar.

Somnath Sapru

Appendix I

Surnames and Nicknames

Adakalo	Bandar	Charangu/Churangoo
Adalati	Bangi	Chhattoo
Aga	Bangru/Bangroo	Chrangoo
	Bharati	Chasbali
Agnishekhar		
Aima	Barbujoo	Chartha
Ambardar	Barbuz/ Barbazoo	Cherwoo
	Batlas	
Anandem	Bataphalu	Chillum
Arzbeqi/Azarbeghi	Battiv	Chiragi
Atal	Bazari, Baqaya	Chowdhury
	Bazaz/Bajaj	
	Betab	
	Bhagat	Dadroo
	Bhalla	Daftari
	Bhan	Dalal
	Bhat/Bhatt/Butt	Dandar
	Bhandari	Dangar
	Bharati	Darbari
	Bindri	Dassu/Dassi/Dass
	Bindroo	Dattatreya/Dhatatri
	Bisht	Daraz

Cashmere: Kashir That Was Yarbal

	Boni/Buni/Bhuni	Dembi
	Bradi	Deva
	Bradoo	Dewani/Dewan
	Braru	Devali
Babu	Braroo	Dhar/Dar /Dharmarti Dhar (Thas)
Badami/Badam Bachloos	Braythh	Din
Badgami	Breth	Dout
Bagati/Bhagati	Budki	Duda
Babu		Drabi/Drabu
Bagati/Bhaghati	Chacha	Dudha/Dua
Bahadur	Chaghat Chagtu/ Chagtoo	Dulloo
Bajala	Chak /Chaku	Durrani
Bakaya	Chakan	Duru
Bakshi	Chakbast	Dutta/Datta
Bal	Chaku/Chak/Chaka/C hoku	
Bali Bamu	Challu	Dral
Bangroo Bambroo	Chaman (Kaul)	
Bamtsunt/Bamchunt	Chana/Channa	
Bamzai/Bamezai	Chandra	

Cashmere: Kashir That Was Yarbal

Bambroo/Bamu	Chandru	
Bazaz (Choncha)	Chatta	
Bhat/Bhatt		
Fata	Jad	Kasab Katju/Kathij
Fehrist	Jan / Jaan Jangi Jala	Kashkari Kitchlu/Kichlu
Fotedar	Jailkhani	Kemdar
	Jalak	Kemmu / Kemu /Kem
	Jalali	Keni
Gadar	Jalla/Jalah/Jala	Khaibri
Gadoo/Gadu/Gaddo	Jattoo/Jatta	Khan
Gadru/Gadroo	Jerath	
Gadwali/Garhwali	Jinsi	Khanaktu
Gagar/Gagroo	Jogi/ jogi (Bhan)	Khanmush
Galikrapa	Jota/Jotshi	Khar/ Kher
Gamkhar/Gamkhar	Jungi	Khari/Kharoo
Ganhar		Khashoo/Khushu
Ganju/Ganjoo/Ganjoor		Khashu
Ganu/Ganzu		Khazanchi
Garoo		Kher/Khar
Garyali	Kaboo/Kabu	Khoda/Khodaballi/ Khudabali
Gassi/Ghassi	Kachru/Kachroo	Khod/Khoda

Cashmere: Kashir That Was Yarbäl

Genyus	Kadalbuju	Khoru/Kharoos
Ghasi	Kak	Khosa
Geeru	Kakapuri	Khoshoo/Khushu
Genyus	Kakroo/Kukru	Khordi
Gigu/Gigoo	Kalla	Khurdi
Giru	Kaloo	Khusdi
Goga/Goja	Kallu/Kalu	Kichlew / Kichlu
Gojani	Kaula	
Gora	Kal push /Kalpashoos	Kilam
Gosani (Bhat)		
Gurkoo /Gorkha	Kampasi	Kissu
Gurtu/Gurtoo	Kampassi	Kisroo
	Kandu	
	Kanshik	Kochak
Hakeem/Hakim	Kantroo , Kant	Kongai/Kanungo
Hak	Kapil Deo	Koosa
Haksar	Kar	Kotha
	Karnail	
Hakhoo/Hakhu /Hakh	Karawani	Kothidar
Haleem/ (Bhat)	Karihaloo/Karihau	Kotru/Kotar
Hali		
Hangloo/Hanglu Handoo/Hun	Kariholu	Kotwal

Cashmere: Kashir That Was Yarbal

doo/Handu		Kuchroo Kuda
Hanjura/Hanjoora	Kasid	Kukilloo
Handu	Katal	Kukru/Kokru
Harkara/Harkar	Kathij	Krundu
Harkauli	Katju	Kashkar
Hans		
Harkasabashi	Kaul Chaman	
Hashia	Kaul/Koul	
Hastuwala	Kaul (Khudabali)	
Hastwaloos	Kaul/Koul/Kaula Kaul (Daftari) Kaul (Ganhar) Kaul (Bamchootoo) Kaul (Dullu)	
Hushroo	Kaw/Kav	
	Karnal Khazanchi Kher/Khar Khoda Khurdi Kitchlu/Kitchloo Kotru Kundu	

Cashmere: Kashir That Was Yarbali

	Magazine Mirakhur Miya	
Labroo/Labru	Monga/Mong Modi	Padar
Ladakhi (Kaul) Lahori	Mota	Padi
Langakshi	Moza	Padora Padroo
Langer/Langar/Lange	Muhtasib	Pahalwan
Langoo Langod Langer/Longer Lather	Muhtasib	Pajnoo
Latta	Mujoo / Muju	Pal
Lattu	Muki	Panda
Laitu	Mukka	Pandit/Pandita
Lidi/Lidhoo	Muku / Mukka	Panzu/Pajnu
Langoo	Mulla / Malla	Parihar
	Munga Mujoo	Parikala Parihar
Machama	Munshi	Parimoo / Parimu
Madan	Mushran	Partazi
Madhup	Mushi	Parva
Magazine	Muthoo	Patar

Cashmere: Kashir That Was Yarbal

Magtu	Muttu	Pathan
Mahaldar	Makhijani	Patwari
Mahanoori		Peer
Majboor Makroo		Peshin/Pishen/ Peshen
Malik		Pin
Malla		Piala
Malmohi	Nadig/ Nadim	Prasad
Mam	Nadir	Premi
Mandul / Mandal	Nagari/Nagri	Puk
Mankapuri	Nagu	Pumbshhu
Mantoo / Mantu	Nakashi	Punjabi
Manwati / Manwotu	Naqib/Naqibe/Nakaib	Purbi
Marchawanghoo Mam	Nari	Pushkar
Masaldan	Naroo Nathoo	Puttoo/Pattoo
Matas/Mattas	Naz	
Mattoo/ Muttoo / Mattu	Nazir, Nazki	
Matto/Mattas	Nehru	Qandahari
Mawa	Niranjan Nath	Qasba
Mazari	Nizamat	Qasid
Mekhzin	Nalka	Qazi/Kazi
Meva		Quanungo/Qanoo ngo

Cashmere: Kashir That Was Yarbal

Mich		
Michu / Meechu		
Mirakhur	Ogra/Ugra	
Miskeen	Ogra (Hakhu)	
Mirza	Oma	
Misri / Mishri, Miskeen	Oont	
Miyan/Miya	Qazi Sadhu/Sadhoo Sahib Sazawal Sabune Shah Shair/ Sher	
Mogal	Sas	Takoo
Monga	Seli	Talwar
Motta	Seru	Tangnoo/Thaploo/Tapiloo
Moti	Shah/Shahpuri(Ticku)	
Muku		
Rafiz	Shala / Shali, Shalia, Shar Shalla	Thalsur/Thaloor / Thalchoors
Raghu	Shameem	Thapal
Rahber	Shanglu/Shunglu/shangloo	Thathoo
Rajanaka	Shashoo/Shishoo	Thela
Raina	Shant	Thogan
Raina (Dullo)		
Raina (Kak)		

Cashmere: Kashir That Was Yarbali

Rambal	Shanth	Tholal
Rangateng	Sharga	Thusoo / Thusur/Thushu
Rangroo	Sharma	Tiku/Ticku/Tiko o/Tikku
Ratnakar (Raina)	Sharabi	Tickoo
Rayu	Shastri/Shatri	Topa
Rawal	Shawl/ Shah	Tota
Razdan	Sher	Toshkhani
Razgaroo		
Reh	Shivpuri	Trakru/Trakroo/T rakari
Reu	Shogoa	Trisal / Tritshal
Revou	Shora	Tritsha
Reyazi/Reazi(Kaul)	Siboo	Tshut
	Sikh	Tsrungu
	Singhari	Tsul
Sabani	Sukhia	Tufchi
Sadhu	Sultan	Tukra
Safaya	Sulu	Tukra / Turki
Safapori	Sum	Tulsi
Sopory/Sopori		
Sahib	Sumchar	Tur
Shali	Sumbli/Sumbally	Turi Turki?
Shishoo	Sumbli/Sumbly	Tutu / Tuttoo
Shori	Sukhia	

Cashmere: Kashir That Was Yarbal

	Suri	
Said	Swaroop/Sarooop/ Swarup	
Salman		
Salik	Taing /Teng	
Santosh / Santoshi	Taku	
Sapori/ Soporee / Shopuni / Pandit	Taimnee	
Sapru /Saproo	Talashi	
Saqi	Tangan	Ugra
Sar	Tankha	Ukhlul
Saraf	Talib (Kaul)	Unt
Sathu	Taplu/Taploo	Upadhya
Sav	Tarivala, Tarwallo	
Sazawal	Tava	
Seli	Tengloo	
Shah	Thakur	
Shair	Thakur	
Shakdhar	Thalchoor	

Vaishnavi	Waffa	Zadoo/Zadu
Veshin		
Vakil		
Vangar	Waguzari	Zahi
Vantu	Wakhlu/Wokhlu/Wakhloo	Zalla
Vattal	Wali/Walli/Wallu	Zalpuri
Vishen	Wanchoo / Wanchu	Zamindar
Vuthoo/Vuthu	Wanganu	Zandchole

Cashmere: Kashir That Was Yarbal

	Wangu/Wangoo/Wangbue	Zani
	Wangnoo/Wangnu	Zari
	Wani	Zaru/Zaroo
	Wanikhan	
	Warikoo / Variku Wasoori	Zarabi/Zarbi
	Wat	Ziaru
	Watel	Zijoo / Zijoo
	Wattal	Zitu
	Wathoo	Zithu
	Waza	Zotan
	Wazir	Zutshi / Zitshoo
	Wufa	
	Yachu/Yachh / Yechh	

..... & Surnames with Vowel endings

A	E	I	O	U
Aima	Lange	Bangi	Handoo	Babu
Bira		Bamzai	Kao	Braru
Bakaya		Bakhshi	Warikoo	Bataphalu
Chandra		Badgami	Zadoo	Bangru
Chacha		Bhuni	Zitshoo	Buju
Chaka		Bradi		Chandru
Chana		Bazari		Charangu
Deva		Bradi		Choku

Cashmere: Kashmir That Was Yarbäl

Gagar		Buni		Chhotu
Hapa		Bindri		Dassu
Jota		Chowdhri		Duru
Jala		Choudhri		Ganju
Kalla		Chothai		Giru
Kala		Drabi		Gaddu
Lala		Durani		Gigu
Moza		Dewani		Hukku
Malla		Garyali		Handu
Mukka		Gadwali		Hukhu
Mota		Ghasi		Jatu
Meva		Jalali		Khoru
Mala		Jinsi		Kachru
Munga		Jogi		Kallu
Machama		Khaibri		Kissu
Parikala		Khurdi		Kukru
Padora		Keni		Khoshu
Piala		Kyani		Kalu
Raina		Khari		Khurdi
Safaya		Karawani		Khashu
Shargha		Kakapuri		Kadalabuju
Shoga		Khazanchi		Kichlu
Shali		Kashgari		Kokru
Tritsha		Ladakhi		Kutsru
Tota		Lidi		Karihalu
Tava		Misri		Khanakatu
Tarivala		Munshi		Kathju

Cashmere: Kashmir That Was Yarbäl

Thela		Mantapuri		Lattu
Ugra		Mazari		Labru
Wufa		Muki		Mattu
Waza		Nagari		Mantu
		Nari		Manwotu
		Purbi		Panzu
		Partazi		Parimu
		Padi		Sibbu
		Qandahari		Shanglu
		Qazi		Sulu
		Sabani		Sapru
		Shali		Tikku
		Singhari		Thusu
		Shopuri		Taku
		Turki		Uthu
		Tulsi		Ukhlu
		Trakari		Vantu
		Vichari		Variku
		Vashnavi		Wanchu
		Waguzari		Wallu
		Wangani		Zitu
		Zalpuri		Zithu
		Zari		Zadu
		Zahi		Zaru

<i>Surnames</i>	<i>Gotra</i>	<i>Surnames</i>	<i>Gotra</i>
<i>Chandra</i>	Bhava Kaphisthala	<i>Tsrungu</i>	Deva Vardhatta Shalan
<i>Kalla</i>		<i>Safaya</i>	Deva Varshaganya Shandilya
Khnoaibri		<i>Aima</i>	Dattatreya (Koul)
<i>Khoru</i>		<i>Babu</i>	
<i>Lattu</i>		<i>Bamtsunt</i>	
<i>Sibbu</i>		Bamzai	
Vantu		<i>Buju</i>	
Zadu		<i>Chowdhri</i>	
<i>Wanikhan</i>	Bhava Kaphisthal Aupamanyava	<i>Dandar</i>	
<i>Peshin</i>	Bhuta Vatsya Aupamanyava	<i>Dangar</i>	
<i>Laugakshi</i>	Bhuta Vatsya Aupamanyava	<i>Dout</i>	
<i>Bangi</i>	Dar Bharadwaja	<i>Drabi</i>	
<i>Dar</i>		<i>Hak</i>	
<i>Jawansher</i>		<i>Jalali</i>	
<i>Misri</i>		<i>Jinsi</i>	
<i>Parikala</i>		<i>Jota</i>	
<i>Qandahari</i>		<i>Kak</i>	
<i>Thalatsur</i>		<i>Keni</i>	
<i>Tritsha</i>		<i>Kissu</i>	
<i>Tshut</i>		<i>Kothdar</i>	
<i>Turki</i>		<i>Ladakhi</i>	
<i>Uthu</i>		<i>Mandal</i>	
<i>Vichari</i>		<i>Mekhzin</i>	
Waguzari		<i>Moza</i>	
<i>Bakhshi</i>	Dar Varshaganya	<i>Muhtasib</i>	
<i>Kachru</i>		<i>Nagari</i>	
Safaya			
Shali			

<i>Safaya</i>	Dar Wasak Shandilya	<i>Padar</i>	
<i>Jatu</i>	Deva Bharadwaja	<i>Pahalwan</i>	
<i>Kallu</i>		<i>Rafiq</i>	
Khuri		<i>Sahib</i>	
<i>Sabani</i>		<i>Salman</i>	
Yachh		<i>Shargha</i>	
<i>Zaru</i>		<i>Shoga</i>	
<i>Banda</i>	Kantha Dhaumyana Laugakshi	<i>Singhari</i>	
<i>Breth</i>	Gautama	<i>Sultan</i>	
Hastiwal		<i>Tota</i>	
<i>Muhtasib</i>		<i>Ugra</i>	
Kav		Zamindar	
<i>Razdan</i>		<i>Kav</i>	Paldeva Vasagargya
<i>Shah</i>		<i>Khoshu</i>	
<i>Shair</i>		<i>Kukru</i>	
<i>Wangani</i>		<i>Malla</i>	
<i>Wat, Zari</i>		<i>Pir</i>	
<i>Ambarda</i>	Pat Svamina Kaushika	<i>Put</i>	
<i>Bira</i>		<i>Fehrist</i>	Svamina Gautama
<i>Braru</i>		<i>Gagar</i>	
<i>Chacha</i>		<i>Kak</i>	
<i>Chaghat</i>		Keni	
<i>Durani</i>		Padora	
<i>Fotadar</i>		Parimu	
Ganju		<i>Razdan</i>	
<i>Jala</i>		<i>Tarivala</i>	
<i>Kachru</i>		<i>Tava</i>	
<i>Kalu</i>		<i>Lala</i>	Svamina Maudgalya
<i>Khurdi</i>			
<i>Kyani</i>			

<i>Mam</i>		<i>Kandar</i>	
<i>Mattu</i>		<i>Buni</i>	
<i>Misri</i>		<i>Tur</i>	Svamina Laugakshi
<i>Pandit</i>		<i>Thusu</i>	Svamina Vasishtha Vatsya
<i>Panzu</i>		Laugakshi	
<i>Salman</i>		<i>Tilwan Koul</i>	Shalan Kautsa
<i>Shanglu</i>			Sharman Gusha
<i>Sulu</i>			Watsya Aupamanyava
<i>Teng</i>		Mukka	
<i>Tritshal</i>		<i>Choudhri</i>	Artha Varshaganya Shandalya
<i>Unt</i>			Bharadwaja
Vashnavi			Bhava Atreya
Wufa			Bhava Devalya
<i>Wanchu</i>		<i>Patar</i>	Bhava Kapishthala Kaushika
<i>Waza</i>			Bhava Kapishthala Manana
<i>Zithu</i>		<i>Variku</i>	Bhava Aupamanyava
<i>Pandit</i>	Pat Svamina Kaushika		Bhuta Laugakshi Dhaumyayana
<i>Watal</i>	Deva Ratra Parwara		Gautama
<i>Khod</i>	Raj Kaushika		Bhuta Laugakshi Gautama
<i>Bazari</i>	Svamina Bharadvaja		Bhuta Raja Laugakshi
<i>Garyali</i>			DhaumyayanaGautama
<i>Jan</i>			Bhuta Aupamanyava Laugakshi
<i>Khar</i>		<i>Giru</i>	Bhuta Aupamanyava Shalan Kayana
Miskin		<i>Pishen</i>	Bhuta Aupamanyava Vatsya
<i>Miyan</i>			Laugakshi
<i>Munshi</i>		<i>Peshen</i>	Bhuta Was Aupamanyava Laugakshi
Tikku			
<i>Fata</i>	Svamina Gautama Laugakshi		

<i>Bhatt</i>	Svamina Koshk Bharadwaka	Dar Bharadwaja Paladev Vasagargya
Kukru		<i>Thakur</i>
<i>Bindri</i>	Wasadeva Palagargya	<i>Zalpuri</i>
<i>Hapa</i>	Atri Bhargaya	<i>Mota</i> Dar Dev Shalan Kapi
		<i>Muttu</i> Dar Dev Shalan Kaushika
<i>Lidi</i>	Dar Kapisthala	Dar Dev Shalana Kuayana
<i>Bhatt</i>		
<i>Mich</i>	Dar Kapisthala Upamanuva	
<i>Jogi</i>	Dar Shandalya	
	Dar Sharman Kautsa	
<i>Sapru</i>	Dipat Saman Aupamanyava	<i>Kalu</i> Dev Aupamanyava
<i>Bhatt</i>	Dat Dat Shalan Kautsa	Dev Vasishta Bharadwaja
<i>Kasab</i>		
<i>Khaumush</i>		<i>Khashu</i>
<i>Malik</i>		<i>Meva</i>
<i>Razdan</i>	Dhaumyayana Datta Kaushika	<i>Pandit</i>
<i>Raina</i>	Dat Sharman Kantha Kashyapa	<i>Chandru</i> Karchanda Shandale
<i>Sazawul</i>	Dat Varshaganya	<i>Kar</i>
<i>Khari</i>	Dat Was	<i>Mantu</i> Kara Shandalya
<i>Bhatt</i>	Deva Bharadwaja	<i>Bhatt</i> Kash Aupamanyava
<i>Gadar</i>		Mitra Atreya
<i>Kallu</i>		Mitra Kaushika
<i>Deva</i>	Deva Bharadwaja Kaushika	<i>Handu</i> Mitra Kashyapa
<i>Bhan</i>	Deva Gargaya	<i>Bhatt</i> Mitra Shandalya
<i>Bhatt</i>	Deva Gautama	<i>Said n</i> Mitra Svamina Kaushika Atreya
<i>Purbi</i>		<i>Pandit</i> Nanda Kaushika Bharadwaja
<i>Hakim</i>	Deva Gautama Laugakshi	Nanda Kotsa
<i>Bhatt</i>	Deva Kaushika	<i>Bhatt</i> Nanda Koshk

<i>Kar</i> Deva Kantha Kashyapa	<i>Yechh</i> (Deva) Parashara
<i>Badgami</i> Deva Kucha Atreya	<i>Balaua</i> Paladeva Vasgargya
<i>Bradi</i> Deva Kashyap Maudgalya	<i>Bangru</i>
Kashyap	<i>Kadalabuju</i>
<i>Mantapuri</i> Deva Laugakshi	<i>Khashu</i>
<i>Pandit</i>	<i>Kichlu</i>
<i>Thogan</i> Deva Parashara	<i>Kokru</i>
Deva Patsva,oma Aupamanyava	<i>Mala</i>
Kaushika	<i>Mam</i>
<i>Tulsi</i>	<i>Mirqakhur</i>
<i>Yachh</i>	<i>Misri</i>
<i>Kak</i>	<i>Munga</i>
<i>Kalpush</i> Deva Patsvamina Koshk	<i>Pir</i>
Deva Rishi Kaushika	<i>Put</i>
Deva Svamina Guatama Kaushika	<i>Sopuri Pandit</i>
Maudgalya	<i>Bhatt</i> Raj Dat Atreya Shalan Kautsa
Deva Sharmanya Kautsa	<i>Bhan</i> Raj Bhut Logaskhi Deva;
<i>Bataphalu</i> Deva Shandalya	<i>Zitshoo</i> Ratra Bhargava
<i>Karawani</i>	<i>Chacha</i>
<i>Bradi</i> Dev Svamina Maudgalya	<i>Partazi</i> Raj Dhattatreya
Dev Chahanda Shandalya	Ratra Bhargava
<i>Kotar</i> Ratra Varshaganya	<i>Hakachar</i> Raj Kaushika
<i>Shunglu</i> Raj Vasisht	<i>Kashgari</i> Rishi Kaushika
Ratra Vishwamitra Agastya	Raj Kautsa
Aupamanyava	<i>Zaru</i> Rishi Kavigargya
	Ratna Maudgalya
	Rama Ratra Vishwamitra Agastya

<i>Trakari</i> Ratra Vishwamitra Vasishtha	Rama Ratra Vishwamitra Vasishtha
<i>Mattu</i> Ratra Vishwamitra Agastya	
<i>Gaddu</i> Sharman Atreya	<i>Duru</i> Raj Shandalya
<i>Bhatt</i> Sharman Bharadwaja	Raj Soma Shandale
<i>Bhatt</i> Shandalya Bharadwaja	<i>Divali</i> Gautama Laugakshi Deva Gargya
<i>Bhatt</i> Sharman Kautsa	<i>Machama</i> Svamina Gargya
Sharman Kanth Kashyapa	<i>Badam</i> Svamina Gautama
Shalan Kayana Atreya	<i>Bazaz</i>
Sharman Kaushika	<i>Charangu</i>
Sharman Shandalya	<i>Chillum</i>
Soma Gargya	<i>Gurut</i>
Shandalya	<i>Kak</i>
Soma Vatsa Gargya	<i>Kakapuri</i>
<i>Mogal</i>	<i>Kohsa</i>
<i>Sav</i>	<i>Labru</i>
<i>Thela</i>	<i>Langer</i>
<i>Chaka</i> Svamina Atreya	<i>Manwotu</i>
<i>Handu</i>	<i>Naqib</i>
<i>Gadwali</i>	<i>Padora</i>
<i>Kala</i>	<i>Piala</i>
<i>Shal</i>	<i>Qazi</i>
<i>Sikh</i>	<i>Razdan</i>
<i>Bali</i> Svamina Bhargava	<i>Thalatsur</i>
<i>Battiv</i>	<i>Thapal</i>
<i>Khar</i> Svamina Bharadwaja	<i>Zari</i>
Svamina Bharadwaja Vatsa Atreya	<i>Kemdar</i> Svamina Gotam Bharadwaja
Svamina Bharadwaja Kaushika	<i>Karihalu</i>

Vatsa	<i>Choku</i> Svamina Gautam Laugakshi
<i>Kutsru</i>	<i>Chhotu</i>
<i>Kalu</i> Svamina Bharadwaja Vas Atre	<i>Turi</i>
Svamina Bharadwaja Kaushika	<i>Labru</i> Svamina Gotam Shandalya
Svamina Bharadwaja Shandalya	<i>Razdan</i>
Svamina Bharadwaja Kaushika	<i>Razdan</i> Svamina Gotam Shalan Kucha
Svamina Bharadwaja Dhuni,kashypa	Atreya
<i>Raina</i> Svamina Gautama Atreya Shalan	<i>Chakan</i> Svamina Gotam Gosh Vas
Kucha	Aupamanyava
<i>Padi</i> Svamina Gautama Atreya Shalan	<i>Tsul</i> Svamina Gotam Atreya
Kucha	Svamina Gotam Shalan Kucha
<i>Labru</i> Svamina Kantha Kashyapa	<i>Khanakatu</i> Svamina Hasya Dvaseya
Svamina Laugakshi	<i>Thakur</i> Svamina Kaushika
	<i>Watal</i>
<i>Bhuni</i> Svamina Maudgalya	<i>Koul (Kulin</i> Svamina Rishi Kanya Gargya
<i>Chana</i>	Svamina Rishi Kanya Vatsya
<i>Dewani</i>	<i>Bhatt</i> Svamina Shandalya
<i>Galikrapa</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
<i>Kanth</i>	<i>Nari</i>
<i>Khazanchi</i>	
<i>Mazari</i>	<i>Gigu</i> Svamina Aupamanyava
<i>Muj</i>	Svamina Kautsa Atrey
<i>Madan</i>	Svamina Vasishta
<i>Mushran</i>	<i>Bhatt</i> Svamina Vasishta Bharadwaja
<i>Put</i>	Svamina Vasa Gulak
<i>Shora Taku</i>	Svamina Vara Mitra Vatsya Guna
	Kaushika

<i>Zahi</i>	<i>Handu</i>
<i>Razdan</i>	<i>Hukhu</i>
<i>Zitu</i>	<i>Langer</i> Svamina Vasa Gargya
<i>Zotan</i>	Svamina Vatsya
<i>Pandit</i> Vatsya Gusha Aupamanyava	<i>Sum</i>
Vishnu Bharadwaja	<i>Ghabi</i> Svamina Vas Atreya
Vishnu Gargya	<i>Thusu</i>
Vishnu Shaunaka	<i>Waza</i>
<i>Bhandari</i> Vasishta Svamina Maudgalya	<i>Bhatt</i> Svamina Vatsya Aupamanyava
Vasa Aupamanyanyava	<i>Wallu</i>
Laugakshi	<i>Chothai</i> Svamina Warshaganya
<i>Bhatt</i> Wasishta	Svamina Was
<i>Rangateng</i>	Chhanda Shandalya
<i>Bhatt</i> Wasishta Bharadwaja	<i>Duda</i>
Wata Dhatta Shalan Kucha	<i>Hangal</i>
<i>Hukhu</i>	<i>Kathju</i>
<i>Handu</i>	<i>Lange Kasid</i>
	<i>Barbuz</i> Varshayani
	Vishwamitra Agastya
	Vatsya Atreya
	<i>Karnel</i>
	<i>Muki</i> Wardhatta Shalan Kucha
	Wata Shalana Kucha.

This list was compiled by the late Pandit Anand Kaul and published by him in his Book “The Kashmiri Pandit” in 1924. One can observe that the spellings of some of the Surnames have got altered through the passage of time but, they are still recognizable so far as the Gotra is concerned.

Surname links

Adakaloo: is an unusual name. The root meaning of the word is to stammer. That is to say in ordinary conversation one says that Mr.x is an Adakaloo. This is also used to signify when some one is shocked beyond words. This could have been at the beginning nickname, which simple stuck to the family.

Adalati: This is an easy one. The word means both in Urdu and Kashmiri court. So obviously some one from the family must have been a court employee.

Badami:This word without the last letter means in Kashmiri and Urdu an almond. Possible the family may have owned almond trees or an almond orchard.

Bagathi: It comes from the word bagh which means garden. Maybe they had a fairly big garden which stood out in the locality. So that the family was identified by that name.

Bahadur: Obviously, it has something to do with martial traditions. May be someone was in the army or connected to the army possibly as a bookkeeper. Bahadur means brave. In the 20th century, Bahadur is also used to describe Gurkha soldiers. Most Gurkhas have the word Bahadur as their surname.

Bamzai:The root word could have been bamshunt which is a variation of famous Kashmiri apple. In Kashmiri, the general name for an apple is Shunt . So it is possible that the name has something to do with the family’s profession linked to fruit cultivation.

Barbuz:Literal meaning is vegetable seller. Possibly some link with agriculture because in 19th century the majority of Pandits lived in the rural areas.

Bazaz: Is a shopkeeper who deals in clothing and textile. Link with shop keeping or trade.

Badab: Means being impatient. So and so is Badab. That would be the normal usage in Kashmiri. A question mark.

Bhan : The root word is Bana. Bhans was a family which lived there and the name comes from the Mohalla called Bana Mohalla. Which is adjacent to Naripirastan and is located on the way to Habba Kadal.

Bhat :This is an all-India name. Among Pandits, the surname belonged generally to those families who lived in villages.

Braru: The root word is Bror, which in Kashmiri means cat. Cat's eyes or supposed to be either blue or bluish and anyone who has such type of eyes even today is described to be like a Braru (Cat).

Chaman: This is a lovely word, which has an air of fragrance about it. Chaman means flower bed in a garden.

Channa: Channa is gram. Possible the family had something to do with growing or selling groceries.

Chaku:The root word is chok, which in Kashmiri means having sour taste. Generally use in relation to dishes for eating. It is also name of clan among the Afghans who once came to the Valley .

Chhattoo : Literally means short.

Daftari : Just as darbari and adalati are linked to the legal profession, so is daftari linked to an office, which started out only to describe a Government Office. But later any kind of office could be described as a daftar.

Dalal : In normal parlance, both in Urdu and Kashmiri, dalal means a commission agent or a go between or an intermediary.

Daraz : Literally means tall

Dhar:Also spelt as Dar. How it came about may have had something to do with aristocracy.

Dhobi : Literally means washerman or laundryman.

Dral: An honest broker. Used even today in buying and selling.

Drabu : They lived in an area between Gaokadal and Habba Kadal and the area was named as Drabyar

Duda : If an ancestor was fond of attending wedding receptions uninvited, he was called duda.

Dulloo : The root word is dul,. which means large earthen vessel. In early 20th century and even later on, such pots were used for storing some liquid other than water. But mostly halwais (sweets,milk and curd sellers) used it for making curds on a slightly larger scale.

Gamkhar : This surname was taken in the form of a hereditary title by Sadanand Kaul ancestor of a famous Delhi Kashmiri Pandit poet Jawahar Nath Kaul Gamkhar 'Saqi', is for instance, believed to have been awarded the hereditary title of 'Ganmkhar' which means 'Consoler' or 'intimate friend' by a Mughal emperor. Jawahar Nath writes that a jagir and a house were granted by the emperor to Sadanand Kaul and 'Itimadul Saltanat Mashirulmulik Mirza Raja Sadanand Sahib Kaul Gamkhar' was the form of address used for him. This position remained a hereditary one.

Ganjoo : This word comes from the urdu word Ganja which means bald.

Gurtu : This surname belongs to the original list of surnames and in the social hierarchy, they ranked high. Literally means yellow.

Hak: This is strange that it should become a surname, because Hak is a leafy vegetable very similar but distinctly different from sag which is grown in Punjab. Hak as a vegetable had perhaps the most important place in the menu of all sections of society from the richest to the poorest.

A word about this vegetable which has also become a surname. In the entire southern part of India, the poor man and rich man's diet must have rice and sambar . which is a different version of the North Indian dal. In North India, the diet of the poor man is dal and roti which means chapathi. In Kashmir valley, before food habits changed , the poor man's diet was rice and hak. Out of that also came the Kashmiri idiom "Hak thi bathi" (vegetable and rice) which was a kind of blessing also bestowed by the grandmother on the grandchildren indicating that this was the poor man's prosperity if he could fill his stomach with the minimum nourishment that hak and batha could give.

Hukku: The root word is Hok. It is applied to two things, one, when describing a thin person. It also relates to clothes drying up which in Kashmiri is Hokun. Probably, the person who got it as a nickname must have been thin.

Hakeem / Hakim: The English word doctor came to India along with the English language. But prior to that the medical profession as personified by the doctor was known as hakeem/hakim. Their would be a strong indication that someone in the family had been a doctor. Hence the name stuck.

Hakhoo: Literally it means something which is dry and relating it to a person would mean a person with a dry sense of humour.

Hangal/Hangul : the literal meaning of the word is the Kashmiri stag or what is popularly called the deer. Maybe, the ancestors had something to do with the Forest Department.

Hastwaloos: A person working in the department dealing with elephants.

Handu: Literally means sheep.

Hazari: During the Moghul rule, military and civil service were totally intermixed. A military officer would also have civilian duties and civilian officer could also put on the military uniform. Hazar means one thousand and ranks were indicated by the number of people a person commanded. For instance, a tis hazari (Thirty thousand) officer commanded this number of men and higher ranks were naturally indicated by numbers in excess of one thousand. So one can hazard a guess that one of the Hazari ancestors must have been prominent official in the the Moghul durbar.

Hoon: Literally means dog, but does not seem to have any link, which is direct to the name.

Jailkhani: obviously official of the Jail Department.

Jalali: Linked with weaving.

Jungi: An ancestor must have been either in the army or having a link with the army department.

Kabu / Kaboo: Literally the root word is Kob, which means in Kashmiri a bent back. So and so is having a Kob. Possible something to do with psychically handicapped.

Kachroo/Kachru: The root word is Kachur, which in English means slightly brownish, especially in relations to the hair of either the male or the female. In speaking of a girl with brownish hair would be referred to as Kachir. This was the nearest to what in English is called Blond Hair. In terms of value or estimation, a person especially a girl was considered beautiful. So it is possible that some ancestors may have been endowed with such hair making him handsome or beautiful.

Kadalbuju : Kadal is the root word which means bridge. Must have had something to do with Civil Engineering or Bridge Construction.

Kak : This is a word which is also used as a common noun and in the thirties and the forties, it was suffix attached to any name to show respect. For instance, Jiwan Lal when referred to in the third person would be called Jiwan Kak or in colloquial since Jiwan becomes Juna, so the end product would be Juna Kak. Obviously, those having this suffix to their name must have been highly respected.

Kakroo/Kakru : Literal meaning is chicken.

Kalla : Literal meaning is head. Probably an intelligent person.

Kampasi : May have had some link with the English word compass- geographer or cartographer.

Kariholu: Literally means crooked neck. Could be a person with some handicap.

Karwanis : Person who sold peanuts. It must have been someone who had either a job or links with the trade.

Khashoo : Literally means left handed.

Katju: The Katju ancestors used to live in a Mohalla in Srinagar known as Kaithal where even now stands a temple known as Kathaleshwar. The residents of Kaithal are described in Kashmiri language as Kathij. This expression would mean in Kashmiri as one residing or belonging to Kaithal. Kathij in course of time became Kathju in India but in Kashmir they are known as Kathij.

Kaul: One of the original six names which appeared when the system of gotra linked to kram (surname) evolved.

Kaw : Literal meaning is crow and would have been used for anyone who was slightly drak.

Kilam : It is a village in Kashmir Valley from where the ancestors of this family came. The most famous and well-known bearer of this name was Justice Jia Lal Kilam, a lawyer, a judge, a social reformer and an author and a literary person.

Kotru : Literal meaning is pigeon

Kotwal : Literal meaning is Judge.

Langar : Literally means community kitchen

Langoo : Literal meaning is cripple.

Magazine : Literal meaning is periodical.

Mahaldar : Literal meaning is petty Revenue Official

Majboor : Literal meaning is helpless

Malla : Literally means boatman, also Muslim priest.

Malik : Literal meaning is chieftain.

Mukka : Literally means fist.

Mam: Literal meaning is Maternal uncle, mother's brother. Also if a person poked his nose into the affairs of others, he would be called mam.

Mandul / Mandal: Literal meaning large posterior.

Masaldan : Literal meaning is vessel containing masala.

Mast : Literal meaning is carefree.

Mattoo/Mattu : They are people who manged looked after religious maths.

Mirza : Literally means title, given in Mughal times.

Mirakhurs : A person working in the department dealing with royal horses.

Mishri/Misri : The root word is Mishri. It means sweet/sugar .

Monga : The root word is Mong. It means a variety of lentil (dal)

Motta : Literally means stout.

Moza : Literal meaning socks.

Muju/Mujoo : The root word is Muj, which literally means radish.

Munshi : Literally means clerk or writer.

Marchawangnoo: Literal meaning is chilli which as we know is very hot. It also means a person with a fiery temper.

Nagari :The literal meaning is a wide drum with a thin leather covering which is used as a musical instrument. The word for that is Nagara and the surname must have developed from that.

Nakashi: Root word is nakash, a craftsman who does engraving.

Nalka : In Kashmiri Nalka means water tap. One of their ancestors worked in the Water Works Department and they began to be called Nalkas, which eventually became their surname.

Nadir: Kind of leader or headman or chieftain.

Naroo : Literally means thin. Another word for thin is nyuk.

Naz: Literal meaning pride. One has “Naz” over some achievement.

Nazir: It is actually a judicial term. A nazir used to write in legal language any petition or document and certify it himself with a stamp.

Ogra: Root meaning is traced to the word “wugre/Ogre”, which means cooked rice which is deliberately made watery.

Oont : Literal meaning Camel, but families which got it had nothing to do with camels. They were clerks who merely collected taxes from camel drivers.

Pahalwan : Literally means wrestler.

Pandit/ Pandita : Literally means learned man.

Parimoo : Literally means foreign or foreigner

Pathan : Literally means person who belonging to North Western part of undivided India.

Patwari : Literally means Revenue Official.

Peer : Literally means religious person/teacher

Quanungo/Kanungo: this surname originated from a revenue official post who was responsible for collection of taxes. Kanungo was also an administrative post and the person who wielded considerable power and authority. Possible one of the ancestors must have held this post eventually became a surname.

Qasba: In Urdu meant an area smaller than a district, equal to a tehsil.

Qazi/Kazi : Literally means Judge

Raina : They were the original inhabitants of Rainawari which was named after them and they were named after the Mohalla.

Rangroo/Rangru : The root word is Rang which means colour and the professional who dyes clothes is called Rangroo.

Razdan: It means aristocrat. But the root word is Raz which means scribe and Razdan was supposed to be a keeper of scribes of the king. Today one would describe its equivalent as the chief of Intelligence.

Sabni : Literal meaning soap.

Sadhu: Literally means holy man.

Safaya: Literal meaning linked to saaf, which means spotlessly clean.

Santhosh: Literally means satisfied and happy.

Sopori: The root word is Sopore. Small town in Kashmir Valley. People from there called Sopori.

Sapru : The root word is Safar, which in Persian and Urdu means travel. So the conclusion is that they (ancestors) may have been professional travellers and the surname got corrupted from Safaru to Sparu

Saqi : Literally means bar tender .

Saraf : Literally means Jewellers

Shastri : Learned man.

Sharma : This surname is related to learned people, scholars and generally associated with the profession of priesthood, astrology and learning.

Shawl : The literal meaning is a rectangular piece of cloth used to cover upper portion of the body. Shawls made in Kashmir were exported and even today there are quite a few families both Pandits and Muslims associated with this trade who got the name Shawl as their surname.

Sher : Literally means lion.

Sumbli: May have hailed from the region of Sumbal in the valley.

Sultan: Clerks to some Sultan.(king)

Shangloo : Literally means six – fingered.

Sharga : Literally means parrot.

Taploo : The original word is Thaploo, meaning the person who snatches things.

Tankha: Literally means salary.

Talashi: Literal meaning is search.

Teng : A slightly raised piece of ground.

Thalchoor: If a person went a step further and stealthily took away a rice plate for the family back home they became Thalchoor. Literal meaning of Thal is plate and choor is used for being a person who stealthily takes something away.

Trakru : Literal meaning is hard.

Trisal: Possible to link with Trishu.

Tufchi: Clerk in the Gunnery department.

Vaishnavi : Literal meaning is vegetarian.

Wakhloo : Literal meaning is a bowl like vessel made of stone used earlier for crushing and grinding masala in the kitchen.

Wangnoo: Literal meaning is brinjal

Wattal : Literal meaning is cobbler

Waza : Literally means cook

Wazir: Literally means adviser, courtier, official.

Zaroo : The word zar means gambling and gambling could be not just for money but also for taking risks.

Zutshi : This is a corruption of Jyotshi. They were astrologers.

Appendix II

Vocabulary

Following are a few words of Kashmiri for those who did not get an opportunity to learn the language at home for some reason. The words are simple and have been selected for every day use. Easy to read and easy to pronounce. If you do not know Kashmiri, learn a few of these words and try them out on a Kashmiri speaking Pandit.

The words in bold are the latest way of pronouncing and those which follow are the older versions of the language.

<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Animals</u>
Man, (marad) manu; Germ.(mannus); Isl.Madr (mannr, mannus, mnnur).	Witch, (dyn) dagun-
Woman, (Zanana); Sc.Zen: Isl.kven, kvinna.	Horse, (gur); Isl.paef,jor, pronounced yoor.
Boy, (Ladka) nechu.	Mule,(kujur)
Girl, Daughter, (kur),	Ass,(khur)

Mother (Maej)	Bull, (dand)
Father, (mol)	Cow, (gau); Isl. <i>ku</i>
Son, (naechu)	Buffalo, (myنش)
Brother, (Baui)	Sheep, (Kut) <i>hundu</i>
Sister, (beneh)	Goat, (bukra); Isl. (<i>aries vel haedus</i>) <i>bekri</i>
Uncle by the father's side, (petur.)	Kid, (shur) <i>kiju put</i> ; Isl. <i>kid</i>
Uncle by the mother's side, (mam);	Dog, (hun); Isl. <i>hundr</i> ; Dan. Germ <i>hund</i> ; Ang. <i>hound</i> .
Aunt (pechin)	Bitch, (huin)
Father's sister, (pof)	Fox, (loh); Isl. Skolli
Mothers's sister, (mas); Dan. <i>moster</i>	Jackal, (chaghal).
Father- in – law (hyuhur)	Wolf, (rama-hun); Dan. <i>hund</i> .
Mother – in –law (hash)	Bear, (haput)
Grandfather (budibab)	Otter, (udur); Dan. <i>odder</i> ; Germ. <i>otter</i> ; Isl. <i>otr, or otur</i>
Grandmother (budimaej)	Stag of Kashmir, (Hangul)
Cousin, father's brothers' son/daughter	Hare, (khur-gosh) (<i>asses' ears</i>) ; Isl. <i>heri (hjer)</i>
(piturbhoy, piturbeni)	Game , (Shikar)
Cousin, mothers' sister's son/daughter	Pheasant , (monal) (the Impeyan pheasant)
(masturbhoy, piturbeni)	Redlegged <i>prtridge</i> , (kukau)
Cousin, fathers' sister's son/daughter	Quail, (batu r)
(pophturbhoy, bhoybeni)	Woodcock, (jel kukur)
Marriage, (naether)	Wild duck, (putchin)
Wedding (khandar)	Tame duck, (butuk); Turkish also
Daughter – in-law (nosh)	Goose, (auz) (<i>anser</i>); Isl. <i>goes, gus</i> .
Son – in – law (Zamtur)	Heron, (burag)
Husband (roon)	Snipe, (tur kukur)
Wife (zanani)	Owl, (rat-I-mogul) (the night mogul or
Child/ Children (shur/shuir)	
Born (zyon)	

<p>Death (marun)</p> <p>Death ceremony (six months later) (shadmos)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Human Body</u></p> <p>Head, (kulah); Isl. <i>kollr</i></p> <p>Nose, (nust); Isl. <i>nos, nasir</i></p> <p>Teeth, (dund); Isl. <i>tonn</i></p> <p>Mouth, (us); Lat. <i>os</i>; Isl. <i>6s</i></p> <p>Hands, (athe)</p> <p>Legs, (zange) <i>kar</i>; Isl. <i>kalfas</i>; Anglice, <i>calf</i>.</p> <p>Feet, (khor) <i>paie</i>; Isl. <i>fater, faetur</i>.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Eatables</u></p> <p>Bread, (chot) <i>wuch</i></p> <p>Water to drink, (trysh).</p> <p>Meat, (maz ,nyeni); Isl. <i>matr</i>; Dan. <i>mad, mat</i>.</p> <p>Fish, (gad); Lat. <i>gadus</i>.</p> <p>Rice (<i>bathe</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Fruits</u></p> <p>Fruit, (meva).</p> <p>Grapes, (duch); Isl. <i>pruga</i>; Dan. <i>drue</i></p> <p>dried grapes (kish –mish)</p> <p>Apples, (chunt)</p> <p>Pears, (tung)..</p> <p>Apricots, (cher) or <i>churi kuj</i>.</p>	<p>thief)</p> <p><u>Seasons</u></p> <p>Spring, (sont) <i>nag (a serpent)</i> figuratively.</p> <p>Summer, (retkol)</p> <p>Autumn, (hard)</p> <p>Winter, (wunde)</p> <p>Rain, (rud)</p> <p>Snow, (sheen)</p> <p>Frost, (khatkosh)</p> <p>Icicles, (shisharghant)</p> <p>Dry ground, (hok, pathar) <i>buhut</i>.</p> <p>Street, (kocha-lane, sadak-road) <i>dur</i>.</p> <p>Garden, (bagh); Angl. <i>bog</i>.</p> <p>Orchard, (wungeh); Isl. <i>vangr</i>; Dan. <i>vange</i>.</p> <p>Wood to burn, (zuin) <i>zalau</i>.</p> <p>Chenar, (buyn).</p> <p>Elm, (bryn).</p> <p>Poplar, (frust.)</p> <p>Willow, (vyr).</p> <p>Light, (gash.)</p> <p>Darkness, (ani -gutta.)</p> <p>Morning, (subu or siberi), whence the name Siberia.</p> <p>Noon, (do-pahar) <i>mudin</i>; Isl. <i>middagr</i>; Dan. <i>middug</i>; Angl. <i>midday</i>.</p> <p>Evening, (shamnas) <i>milehwan</i>.</p> <p>Sun, (siri.)</p>
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<p>Boat, (nau) (<i>navis</i>); Isl.<i>noi</i>.</p> <p>Barge, (bahatz.)</p> <p>Punt, (shikari).</p> <p>Boat (shikara)</p> <p>Bigger boat (dunga.)</p> <p>To-day, (az) <i>uz</i></p> <p>To-morrow, (paga) <i>puga</i>.</p> <p>Day after to-morrow, (kaelket) <i>kulket</i>.</p> <p>Yesterday, (rath) <i>youch</i>.</p> <p>Day before yesterday, (outreh) <i>auterah</i>.</p> <p>This year, (yuhus) <i>johus</i>.</p> <p>Next year, (bront hus.)</p> <p>Past year, (purhus)</p> <p>Right , (dechin) <i>duchin</i></p> <p>Left, (khovur) <i>kawur</i>.</p> <p>Straight forward, (sida).</p> <p>Bring, (un).</p> <p>Take away, (nih.)</p> <p>Lift up, (tul).</p> <p>Go, (gatz.)</p> <p>Come, (wulah.)</p> <p>Go quickly, (jald gatz) <i>tiken gatz</i></p> <p>Go slowly, (lut-puk, ware ware puk)</p> <p>Go away, (guchu) <i>kulwat guchu</i></p> <p>Mount your horse, (ghoris khas) <i>ghor iskus gatz</i></p> <p>Dismount, (bonwas.)</p> <p>Get up, (wut)</p> <p>Alone, (kunuy zon) <i>kani</i></p>	<p>Silver, (ropf) <i>rup</i>.</p> <p>Copper, (tram) <i>tromb</i>.</p> <p>Lead, (nag)</p> <p>General</p> <p>Ice, (tulla) <i>kutur</i>.</p> <p>Strong, (dahur.)</p> <p>Weak, (kamzor) <i>lagur</i>.</p> <p>Cold, (teer) <i>tur</i>.</p> <p>Hot, (tut) ; garm ,warm, <i>ushan</i>.</p> <p>Heavy, (gob) <i>gus</i>.</p> <p>Light, (lot) <i>lut</i>; Isl. <i>lettr. lett</i>; Dan. <i>let</i>.</p> <p>High, (thod) <i>tuhud</i>.</p> <p>Low, (sun.)</p> <p>Great, (bod) <i>bud</i>.</p> <p>Little, (lotkut) <i>luk</i>; Isl. <i>lagrslag</i>; Angl. <i>low</i>.</p> <p>Rough, (tuhur)</p> <p>Smooth, (sun)</p> <p>Life, (zindagi) <i>ruh</i></p> <p>Death, (mud); Isl. <i>mord</i>.</p> <p><u>Kashmiri Numbers</u></p> <p>1. akh.</p> <p>2. zuh; Dan. <i>To</i></p> <p>3. treh; Dan. <i>Tre</i></p> <p>4. chor <i>Char</i>.</p> <p>5. panz</p> <p>6. sheh; Dan. <i>Isl. sex</i></p> <p>7. sut; Dan. <i>syv</i></p>
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<p>In company, (<i>seeth</i>)</p> <p>All go away, (saere gechev) <i>kulwat guchu</i></p> <p>Sit down, (beh.)</p> <p>What is the price of this? (keetih chu) <i>Kyt chus mal?</i></p> <p>Which is the way to? (kapare gechev.....) <i>Wut kute kinche?</i></p> <p>Is there a horse path to? (<i>Gur wut cha?</i>)</p> <p>How many? (kaetha che) <i>Kutz?</i></p> <p>How much? (keetis) <i>Kyt chu?</i></p> <p>There is, (chu.)</p> <p>There is not, (chu ne) <i>chu-no.</i></p> <p>Give, (dih); Isl.<i>tja</i>, pronounced <i>tia</i>.</p> <p>What is the name of this or that?</p> <p>(yeth kya chu nav) Yeth kiyah chu nav hut? (<i>tuyah kya chu nav</i>) <i>What is your name</i></p> <p>Flame (Reh)</p> <p>Fire (Nar)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>House</u></p> <p>Home (Ghare)</p> <p>Portico, landing (Brande)</p> <p>Living room, ground floor (Wot)</p> <p>Bed room, first floor (Kuth)</p> <p>Living room, second floor, used in summer (Kanee)</p> <p>Small room, usually a projection through first floor bed room (Dub)</p> <p>Window (Daer)</p> <p>Court yard (Aangan)</p>	<p>8. ayt; Isl. <i>atta</i>.</p> <p>9. nov nuch; Dan.<i>ni</i>; Isl.<i>nur</i>.</p> <p>10. dah; Lat. <i>Decem</i>; Isl.<i>tugr</i>.</p> <p>11. Kah.</p> <p>12. bah</p> <p>13. truvah triuh; Dan.<i>tretten</i></p> <p>14. chudah chudan.</p> <p>15. pandah pandaz; Dan.<i>femtin</i>; Isl.<i>fimtan</i>.</p> <p>16. shurah shrah.</p> <p>17. sadah sudah; Isl. <i>seytjan</i>; Dan. <i>Syten</i>.</p> <p>18. ardah aytadah; Isl.<i>atjan</i>; Dan.<i>atten</i>.</p> <p>19. kunawuh kunakwuh.</p> <p>20. wuh; Dan.<i>tyve</i></p> <p>21. akwuh; Dan. <i>En-tyve</i></p> <p>22. zutowuh zuhtanwuh.</p> <p>23. truwuh trehwuh.</p> <p>24. chuwuh chuwah.</p> <p>25. pinzuh panauh</p> <p>26. shatwuh shahwuh</p> <p>27. satowuh sulawuh</p> <p>28. athowuh aytawuh.</p> <p>29. kuntrih kunatruh.</p> <p>30. trih ruh; Dan.<i>trediva, tredre</i>; Isl.<i>prajatin</i></p> <p>40. chutji chutaijyh.</p> <p>50. panzah; Isl.<i>fimtin</i>; Swed. <i>Femti</i></p> <p>60. shet shuzut; Isl. <i>sextin</i>; Swed.<i>sexti</i></p>
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Garden (<i>Bagh</i>)	70. <i>sutut</i> ; Isl. <i>esantin</i> : Swed. <i>sijutti</i>
Lane (<i>Koche</i>)	80. <i>shyt</i> .
Road (<i>Sadak</i>)	90. <i>numut</i> <i>nuhmut</i> ; Isl. <i>nintin</i> ; Swed. <i>nitti</i> .
Ladder, stairs (<i>Haer</i>)	100. <i>hut</i> ; Isl. <i>hundred (olim hund)</i> .
Lock (<i>Kuluf</i>)	1000. <i>sas saz</i> .
Key (<i>Kunz</i>)	10,000. <i>duh sas luk</i> .
(<i>Hankel</i>)	100,000. <i>lach lak</i> .
Quilt (<i>Laef</i>)	100,000,000 <i>kror</i> .
Bed sheet (<i>Karch</i>)	1 st . <i>gyodnuk gureh nyak</i> .
Rug (<i>Satrand</i>)	2 nd . <i>Dowyum</i> .
Floor spread (<i>Masnad</i>)	3 rd <i>treyum</i>
Floor covering made of straw (<i>Waguv</i>)	4 th <i>churum surum</i> .
Carpet (<i>Kaleen</i>)	5 th <i>peenchim panjum</i> .
Blanket (<i>Chadar</i>)	6 th <i>sheyum</i> ,
Wooden platform for eating (<i>Chuik</i>)	
Metal plate in which rice is eaten (<i>Thal</i>)	
Native cup of metal (<i>Khos</i>)	<u>Clothes</u>
Big spoon used to stir and serve vegetables on thali (<i>Krech</i>)	Native gown (<i>Pheran</i>)
Cooking vessel (<i>Bohugun</i>)	Old head dress for women, out of style now (<i>Tarange</i>)
Big vessel usually used for boiling rice at function and weddings (<i>Deeche</i>)	Part of head gear- a long rope like peace of cloth (<i>Pooch</i>)
Bucket (<i>Balteen</i>)	Cucumber band, a kind of belt to hold up the
A line of parallel bridge with gap in between on which food is prepared during weddings (<i>Wur</i>)	loose pheran that women used to wear (<i>Luing</i>)
Cook (<i>Waza</i>)	Pyjama for ladies (<i>Shalwar</i>)
When masala is mixed with liquid (<i>Bagare</i>)	Dhoti, saree (<i>Dhyut</i>)
Flame from cooking fire (<i>Reh</i>)	Pant (<i>Patloon</i>)
Fire (<i>Nar</i>)	A large cyndrilical pot made of stone

<p><i>Wood fuel (Zuin)</i></p> <p><i>Earthen cookin g place before kerosene and gas came on the scene (Dhan)</i></p> <p><i>Kerosene (Mechi Teel)</i></p> <p><i>Oil, generally cooking oil (Teel)</i></p> <p><i>Matchbox (Ganakdeb)</i></p> <p><i>Water (Pyon)</i></p> <p><i>Drinking water (Tresh)</i></p> <p><i>Clothing (Palav)</i></p> <p><i>Holy thread (Yone)</i></p> <p><i>Red coloured thread tied around the wrist (Naervan)</i></p> <p><i>Yagnopayit (Mekhal)</i></p>	<p>with a round hollo in the middle, used for pounding</p> <p>paddy/ rice, gone out of use, now can only be seen</p> <p>in some villages (Kanz)</p> <p>Belt (Cummer-band)</p> <p>A string used to tie the pyjama with (Duur)</p> <p>Needle (Sichin)</p> <p>Thread (Pun)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Vegetables</u></p> <p>Leafy vegetable, staple with rice (Hak)</p> <p>Nolkol (Monje)</p> <p>Pototo (Oluv)</p> <p>Grown on water resembles soft, long wood- a delicacy (Nadru)</p> <p>Shalgum (Goje)</p> <p>Onion (Gande)</p> <p>Califlower (Phul-gobi)</p> <p>Cabbage (Band-gobi)</p> <p>Brinjal or egg- plant as called in U.S (Wangun)</p> <p>Tomato (Tamatar)</p> <p>Spinach (Palak)</p> <p>Similar to spinach, slightly bitter (Meethi)</p> <p>Egg (Thool)</p>
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	Chicken (<i>Kokur</i>) Mutton (<i>Maz , nyeni</i>)
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Appendix III

Batte Guzatt

The word batta means Pandit, it also signified the religion as being Hindu as compared to the majority Muslims. Guzatt is a corruption of Gazette, the English word and put together, Batte Guzatt means a Pandit gossip sheet. It could include rumors, sarcasm, comments mostly nasty and a bit of backbiting. In one sense Pandits love to criticize each other. For instance, the phrase “Batte chu dai Congress”, which became popular in early 40s. It means that a Pandit is argumentative, cantankerous like a politician, a talking factory. And today also the older ones can be heard describing a community member has a dai Congress. The literal meaning is that a Pandit is equal to two and half times the strength of the Congress party.

Proverbs and Sayings

1. **“Zara zara hai mere Kashmir Ka mihman-nawaz**

Rah men pathar ke tukrun se mila pani mujhe.” (Urdu)

“Everywhere greets me the hospitable host of my Kashmir
I got water from even the pebbles on the way.”

2. **Bacha-pasand**

(fond of children)

3. **“Kashmiri darin mulk nistand ki ma muqurar kunem” (Persian)**

The Kashmiris are not to be found here that we might appoint them in public them in public offices).

4. **Yad mtsarit chhuh nah kanh wuchhan tannih sari wuchhan**

(No one looks into the stomach but everone sees the body).

5. **“Bar chhra am nazar kun peshaniam bibin**

Dagha ghulamta Shahi-Maulast bar jebin”

“Gar Musalman Kafit o Kafir Musalman shud chi shud

Acha bayad shud na shud gar in u gar an shud chi shud.” (Persian)

“Look at my face and see my forehead

The mark of slavery of the Master King is on my forehead”

“If Musalman became a Kafir or Kafir a Musalman

If he did not become what he ought to (ie., pious, God-fearing, etc)

What matters if it he became this (Kafir) or that (Musalman).”

6. **Batah Batah kaw batah**

“ There is a saying, “Batta Batta Kaw Batta”, which denotes that a Pandit pays immediate attention to the distress call of another Pandit. It was heartening to note that no section of the community remained as an un-attached observer. They

participated whole-heartedly. The educated, semi-educated, so called progressives or conservatives all contributed towards it's successful functioning.”

Vitasta, Pandit Moti Lal Pushkar, Jammu.

(The Pandits are like crows)

7. Kashmiri ba Kashmiri guft

Kashmiri ki man Khalas shavam (Persian)

A Kashmiri desires the destruction of his fellow countryman. The Pandit is loyal and faithful to his master of which numerous evidences can be found in the history of Kashmir.

8. Batas tsed

(The Pandit has endurance)

9. Batah mor shenkih

The Pandit died of hesitation (Supersitition)

10. Batah mari Magi

The Pandit is apt to die in the month of Magh

11. Batah chhuh butlayth zats jaldai tatan jaldai teran

The Pandit is of the nature of a brazen pot-quick to get heated and quick to get cold)

12. Batah mari Magi

The Pandit is apt to die in the month of Magh

13. Batah chhuh butlayth zats jaldai tatan jaldai teran

The Pandit is of the nature of a brazen pot quick to get heated and quick to get cold).

14. Sheen Hetun Walun, Ghachow Nanakakun

It has started snowing, let us go to neighbour's (Nan Kakun) house.

15. Dale Bathe

Literally means Dal (cereal and Boiled rice), but a derogatory term used to allude to the cowardice of Pandits.

16. Be gharaz nist agar dusti ighar kunand

Ba Khusumat chu darayand na joy and sabab

Ba muhabbat chu zubab o ba muruwat somber

Ba sakhawat chu ghurab o ba suja at artab. (Persian)

“ It is not without selfishness if they show friendship

“ When intent to quarrel they (Pandits) need have no cause

“ In love he is like a fly; in helping like a hornet

“ In generosity like a crow; in valour like a rabbit”.

17. Kirish taan chai

Refers to tea served in Chinaware as compared to the traditional khos (Metal cup), and the liquid in it being of tea served in the rest of India and not green tea. The expression also denoted the mild criticism by the older generation against younger generation going to restaurants in defiance of orthodoxy.

18. Diche Mei Li

Oh, you naughty boy

19. Nun kaf pesh peath bur gow Sultanju

To fool an illiterate about spelling of the word Sultanju.

20. Lille Lille Vacheri achi ganus

Ghase lov Travay, Khey Panus

Oh, you little she calf, enter the cow shed. I will give you bushel of grass, eat it.

21. Lithenavine aye as

Smearred with dust and mud or dead tired. Usually women used to say this especially when they would go out of the house and get caught in the rain or sleet or snow or just become tired.

22. Deenuk Bor Chum Seenaspel

Devoted to religion. Literally means the weight of my religion is on my chest

23. Shithebatte

Ordodox, obstinate Pandit.

24. Zu ti jan wathe Hindustan us

Dil chum Pakistan us seet

Will sacrifice my body for India but my heart is with Pakistan. This was said by a small section of pro –Pakistani Muslims.

25. Laddie Shah Kus os

Literally means who was Laddie Shah. He was one who would sing satirical songs while ringing iron rings set in an iron rod.

26. Ayes China mahara Sarhadus pet roza

Asi chue sule pahan neyrun

Deev asi ijazat

We live in the border area so we have to leave early. Please let us go. The reference is to Pandits living in down town area of Srinagar like Chattabal of Ali Kadal when they would visit relatives or friends in the Habba Kadal or Karan Nagar or any other area for away. At that time almost every body had to walk.

27. Hak bathe pushthan

May God always provide us with sag (Hak) and boiled rice.

28. Urzu, aye ti bathe

May God grant you good health, long life and food.

29. Hamla Avar khabardar

Hum Kashmiri hain tayar

You invaders beware (be warned) , we Kashmiris are ready to face you. Popular slogan at the time of the Kabailie invasion of Kashmir in 1947.

30. Thadis nai akil ais, tundas kya gow

Yataan warinihindi shurew Sooruy khew.

If the tall fellow had no sense, what happened to the single armed fellow.

Till the midwife's children grabbed everything. The reference is to Sheikh Abdulullah and his colleague Afzal Beg who was slightly handicapped and Bakshi Ghulam Mohamed.

31. Suen Kyabi chuv ronumut or Seun Kiya Chuve

What dishes have you cooked. Normally used to be asked when a friend , a neighbour or a relative dropped in.

32. Yemis Ne Kan, Themis ne soun.

Yemis Ne soun, Themis ne kan

One who does not have pierced ears has the ear rings, one who has pierced ears does not have the ear rings.

33. Batta Chu dai Congress

A Pandit does not accept things blindly but argues like the Congress leaders. This saying is of recent origin perhaps from the forties when Congress debated publicly.

34. Banihalle Yapari, Banihalle apari

On this side of Banihall and on the other side of Banihall meaning thereby Kashmiri and Non-Kashmiri and Banihall being the highest point, a kind of physical and cultural boundary between Kashmir and the rest of India.

35. Khin chas weni wasan (Still Wet behind the ears)

Literal meaning is mucous is still flowing out of the nose. It also means that person is totally inexperienced or is immature.

36. Kawas Ti Kyani Muil Gachun

Coincidence. When one throws a pebble at a flying crow it rarely hits the crow. But when it does it is an event, a coincidence.

37. Chiti Biti Litibab, Ainyut ti Wushkabi

A small compact family as compared to a large joint family.

39. Payenai Nabha Thrut

May the thunderbolt fall on you. Thrut is the Kashmiri word for thunder.

40. Amis Hasey Payee Nabhe Thrut

Generally refers to a sudden change in fortune for the better. When third party discuss the subtle meaning is thajt though he did not deserve it he got it. Ex.Lottery or unexpected.

41. Paynay Thrut

It is a curse which one throws in anger. Literal meaning of Thrut is thunderbolt. Once two Pandits clerks were quarreling in a Government office. Unexpectedly, their superior a British Officer who passed by heard the sounds and the words, did not understand and came inside to investigate. One Pandit explained to the Englishman thajt the other Pandit had abused him. Asked what the abuse was, he literally translated it by saying, "Sir, he told me that may the thunderbolt fall on you".

42. Ayas Hod.

The literally meaning of Hod is when a horse refuses to budge and does not obey the commands. Generally used for children when they become cranky.

42. Ayas Lath

Literal meaning of Lath is to have an epileptic fit. As an idiom is used to describe a person who suddenly changes his mind and does something unexpected.

43. Aas khur

The literal meaning of khur is a knot of thread which is difficult to unravel. The expression means that someone has landed himself into a great difficulty.

44. Goyee Prah

An admonition generally addressed to the girl child.

45. Dividendo Makayivando

When economics made an entry into subjects, which Pandits began to study it was not very popular. One of the toughest topics to learn was dividends and the helpless students rhymed it with makay that in Kashmiri means corn, especially corn on the cob. It was a cry of despair.

46. Chaengij chatin

The literal meaning is a grass mat like waguv but, chaengij is smaller. Chatin means to cut. Put together, the expression means criticising a person behind his back.

Note : This is only a random selection, but there are many more in the vocabulary.

47. Batah gav gratah

The Pandit is a mill

48. Batas bod doh tah phakah

On his big day (auspicious day) Pandit fasts

Appendix IV

Some British Officers: Who Served In Kashmir

Clutterbuck, Sir, Peter H., Kt., 3 June, 1924, C.I.E., Jan. 1, 1918; C.B.E., Dec. 30, 1919, K. H. Medal, 2nd Class, Dec. 12, 1911. Chief of Forests.

Colvin, Lieut.-Col. E. J. D., C.I.E., Jan 1, 1946. P.M, Jammu & Kashmir 1932 – 1937 when he was succeeded by N. Gopalswamy Iyengar who stayed in office till 1942 when R. C. Kak took over till 1947.

Glancy, Sir B. J., G.C.I.E., Jan 1, 1946. His connection with Kashmir came when he was appointed head of the Glancy commission to enquire into the grievances of Muslims after the 1931 communal riots in the Valley.

S. W. Talbot , commissioner Ladakh,

F. Ludlow, Joint Commissioner Ladakh.

Mac Dermott – he was the principal of Government college in the twenties and became Director of Education in 1929.

G. E. C. Wakefield – came first to Kashmir from another Princely state Hyderabad as Minister – in – waiting after Maharaja Hari Singh took over in 1925. Subsequently was made Minister for Home and Foreign affairs. When the July 1931 riots took place, he was conspicuous by his absence at the scene when he should have been on the spot. It was subsequently learnt that Wakefield knew about the plan to foment riots by the Punjab Muslim League and decided to literally hide at the Residency while riots and killing took place in Srinagar and the other places in the Valley .

Alkincon – State Engineer.

Dr. G. N. Millar - Chief Medical Officer.

Captain Cheveneux Trench – commissioner of Ladakh.

Lt. Robert Thorp - Army officer who died in Kashmir while on duty.

Joly de Lotbiniere - He was a French engineer who built a canal 150 yards wide which started three miles above the city of Srinagar and ended at the Wular Lake 30 miles below. Until that time (1905) the city was plagued by recurrent floods every year and this canal drained of excess water during floods and saved the city.

Alexander Stow : He was a commissioner.

W. P. Appleford, : Chief Engineer.

Dr.E.R.Kathleen Vaughan : In charge of State Jubilee Hospital.

Mr.Sam Steane : Assistant conservator of Forest.

B.D.Coventry : Chief conservator of Forest.

Appendix V

Karkun – The Long Gray Line

Aima Kashi Nath : A graduate, he joined the “Quit Kashmir Movement”, and was later Kashmir representative of ‘Ranbir’, joined Govt Service after 1947.

Bakshi R.N. : Born on Dec 24, 1924 ed B.Sc BE (civil) Bombay 1946 m Dr. Sheila 1958; started as Supervisor April 1947, then Asst Eng April 1948, Divisional Engineer June 1955; pioneered developmental works in Ladakh notably construction of a major portion of Leh-Kargil Road 1955-57; made special study of socio-economic problems of

waterless Kandi areas in Jammu region 1967; Executive Engineer incharge Irrigation, R & B, Flood control, Sonawari Project since April 1968, bringing about marked change in development of once marshy area now converted into lush green fields; interested in Indian classical music, astrology.

Dhar, Sridhar Joo : Born on Feb 15, 1897 Srinagar ed BA 1918, PFS 1924 m 1914; scholarship-holder throughout educational career; first student to take science in Intermediate SP College 1914; started career as Treasury Accountant Srinagar; first Kashmiri to be selected for superior forest training 1921; served State 29 years as ACF, DCF and Conservator; awarded 'Khilat' for meritorious work in checking 'Kuth' smuggling in Kishenganga Valley 1935-41; prepared a dozen working plans, revised Forest Code; helped Dr Neve in compiling flora of local vital plants; member Empire Forestry actively connected with Samaj Sudhar Samiti, Sanatan Dharam Yuvak Sabha, Vidhva Rakshni Sabha and several educational institutions.

Zutshi, Dr. Anand Mohan: Pandit Anand Mohan Zutshi 'Gulzar Dehlvi' who is counted among the best-known faces in Urdu and Persian poetry was born in Delhi to Pandit Tribhuvan Nath 'Zar', who was himself a well known Urdu poet.

A highly qualified individual with postgraduate degrees in law and business administration and a doctorate in Urdu, Dehlvi edited "Science ki Duniya", the first Urdu magazine devoted totally to science.

Dehlvi has been conferred the World Peace Poetry Award (Berlin), and honoured in places like Cleveland, Ohio, Atlanta, Indianapolis, Chicago, Columbus and Toronto, Lahore and Karachi.

Also popularly known in the Urdu circles as Bulbul-e-Hind, Imam-e-Urdu, Gulzar-e-Khusro, Shair-e-Qaum, Mujahid-e-Urdu and Tooti-e-Nizami, Dehlvi is credited with having arranged and attended about 40,000 mushairas around the world.

(Firoz Bakht Ahmed)

Ganhar, J. N. : Born Oct 1916 Srinagar ed MA (eng), broke previous records in Matric and FSc; formerly student-editor Colege magazine 'Pratap', and Lucknow University Union journal 'The Wings'; was Secy Students Council, Jt Secy College Debating Club. Captain College Boating Crew; served J & K Govt Information Deptt interalia as Associate Editor 'J & K Information'. Information Officer, Asst Director Counter-propaganda, Director News Radio Kashmir; transferred to Govr of India 1951, held posts of News Editor AIR, Campaign Officer, DAVP; and Talks Officer, External Service

AIR; Deputy Principal Information Officer PIB and Regional Officer Directorate of Field Publicity, J & K Region Pub; Buddhism in Kashmir & Ladakh, Kashmir's Contribution to composite Culture of India, Case Against Pakistan etc. Add: Motiyar, Rainawari, Srinagar.

Hashia, Jagan Nath : Born on April 20, 1916 Srinagar ed BA (Hons) LLB m Rupa 1933; captained College Hockey XI 1936-37, won prizes in athletics, awarded college colour in Hockey, recipient of Lord Chelmsford All-Round Best Graduate Medal 1937, LLB from Allahabad Varsity 1939, joined Srinagar bar same year and J & K Law Deptt 1942; joined Kashmir Police Service 1945 after topping list of successful candidates in Kashmir Civil Service exam; was ASP,CID after training at Phillaur; served Poonch District 1947; SP 1948; conducted enquiries against former Premier Bakshi Ghulam Mohd 1964; Addl DIG, CID 1965 and DIG, CID since 1967; awarded President's Police Medal 1968 for meritorious services and selected for IPS same year.

Jalali, Bansi Lal Kaul : Born on 1920 ed BA; Deputy Director Visitors Bureau (now Toursim) 1944, Secy to Kashmir Trade Commissioner Delhi 1959-62, Deputy Secy J & K Legislative Assembly 1962-65 and since then its Secy Contributed literary articles to 'Kashmir Toursim' and 'Journal of J & K Legislature'.

Jalali, Jia Lal Koul: Born on Nov 3, 1896 Srinagar ed first Kashmiri MA (English) 1917 m 1911 late Dhendedi; retired as Asstt Governor Jammu Province 1950 Pub: "Economics fo Foodgrains in Kashmir" 1931, "Hand-book of Visitors to Kashmir" 1932, "To Kashmir" 1933, "Kashmiri Primer" 1951, "Lab-Vak" 1954, "Heemal" 1962, "Shri Bhagwan Ka Shaster Nam Satotram" etc; former member State Text Book Advisory Committee, also script committee for Kashmiri language.

Jalali Tej Krishan : Born on March 29, 1941 Srinagar ed M. Music; vocalist, violinist; took part in music concerts as a student and won prizes; had 6 years training in vocal music at Bombay from Chidanand, Nagarkar; did B. Music in vocal and violin; Instructor Institute of Music and Fine Arts Jammu since April 1965; went to Gwalior for higher training on scholarship by State Cultural Academy 1967-68, learned there from Balasaheb Poochhlwale and did M. Music first class first from Jiwaji Varsity.

Jalali, P. N. : Born on Dec 22, 1926 ed BA m Sumitra 1954; journalist: 'all-round best' in middle classes; took part in freedom struggle; imprisoned during 'Quit Kashmir' movement for 14 months; an organiser armed resistance against Pak-raiders 1947-48; imprisoned again Delhi jail for 1 year 1950, later interned Karol Bagh 6 months; progressive leanings; visited abroad; briefly Editor I/C Govt Lala Rook Publication 1957, Spl Correspondent IPA 1959-61, EINS 1961-63, Staff Correspondent Patriot & Link

1961-67; Tribune 1966-67; presently Correspondent Bombay Blitz, PTI; President Kashmir Press Club since June 1970.

Kak, Radha Krishan : Born on 1911. ed BA Sri Pratap College Srinagar; journalist; correspondent United Press of India 1936-38, 'Statesman', 1942-1970, 'Amrita Bazar Patrika' 1944-60, Associated Press of America 1949-60, 'Daily Mail' London 1950, 'Tribune' 1943-58, 'Civil & Military Gazette' 1943-47, 'Hindu' since 1949; founder-President Kashmir Press Club 1950,

Kashi, Nath Bamzai : Born on July 1, 1915 Srinagar ed BA LLB m Chand Rani Sept 1931; courted jail in Kashmir Bread Movement 1932. President J & K Students Union 1937-38, joined editorial staff 'National Herald' 1939; mem; Working Committee All India Students Congress 1941-42, started legal practice in Srinagar 1943, enrolled as active member J & K National Conference; with the 'Daily National Standard' Bombay 1944-45, Asstt Editor 'Blitz', then Spl Correspondent at Delhi 1946; Director of Information J & K Govt at Delhi 1948; OSD (Kashmir Publicity), Ministry of I & B, GOI 1949-65; Chief Press Adviser 1965-66 Registrar of Newspapers for India since July 1966.

Kaul, Jaya Lal : Born on Nov 1900 ed MA LLB (Allahabad); Lecturer English S P College Srinagar 1927; founder-Principal Karansingh College Mirpur 1944-46; Deputy Director Education 1950-52; Principal S P College, Srinagar 1952; adviser Kashmiri, Radio Kashmir 1958-62; Secy J & K Cultural Academy 1963-66; member Executive Board, General Council All India Sahitya Akademi 1957-67; Writers Delegation to U S S R 1961. Pub: "Kashmiri Lyrics," "Interpretation of Ghalib," "Genius of Tagore", "Lal Ded" (in collaboration) and "Studies in Kashmiri".

Kaul, Gwasha Lal : Born in 1897 Srinagar ed graduate m Gunawati 1924; journalist, founder-editor of first English newspaper form Srinagar in 1934; served State Govt as Director of News (Radio Kashmir), Information Officer etc 1948-60, Pub: Kashmir Through The Ages (8 editions), Kashmir Guide and Album (3 editions),

Kaul, K. N. : Born on 1916 Srinagar ed MA 1937 m Shobhavati Devi 1933; stood first in BA in State 1935, granted scholarship by J & K Govt for higher studies, also by Punjab Varsity for standing first in Applied Maths, again stood first in MA (Math) PB 1937; part-time Lecturer DAV College Lahore, then teacher J & K Edu Deptt, stood first KCS 1942, became Tehsildar; promoted DC 1956; held high posts like Administrator Municipality Srinagar/Jammu, DC Poonch, Ledakh, Doda; Secy Public Service Commission, Secy to Govt, selected to IAS (senior scale) 1968; now Director Land Records.

Kanwar Man Mohan Kishen : Born on Feb 1930 Srinagar ed BA LLB m Anuradha 1957, lawyer High Court, also looks after father's (Raja Upendra Kishen) property, business in Delhi, elsewhere; was on business tour to US, UK, Italy etc 1958-59.

Kaul, Raghu Nath : Born on May 22, 1913 Srinagar ed MSc LLB; Airline Executive; practised as Vakil High Court Srinagar, joined Kashmir Police Service through open competition and appointed ASP Jammu till 1943 when joined as Senior Executive Govan Brics Ltd New Delhi; joined Air India New Delhi as Station Superintendent 1946; posted to Nairobi, Paris, Singapore, Sydney, Hongkong as Manager Air India Offices 1948-63; returned India as Commercial Manager incharge worldwide sales for Air India, now Deputy Director incharge Hotels Division; Chairman India Chapter PATA, Director Pacific Area Travel Association Sanfrancisco, Hony-life member SKAL Rotarian; decorated gold medal by Pope Paul.

Kaul, Upendra Kishan Raja : Born on 1910 ed BA m Rani Sumiti 1930; businessman; co-founder (with elder brother) Kashmir Match Factory at Lasjan 1926, later shifted to Baramulla where also set up Kashmir Pharmaceutical Works 1928 (Govt took over both in 1960); now dealing in fruit business; owns big gardens at Nagin, Tangmarg, Nishat etc, share-holder Vimco Western India Match Coy; awarded title of 'Raja' by Maharaja of Patiala; Director J & K Bank since 1955; interested in agriculture, construction of buildings etc; on world tour with wife, children since May 6, 1970.

Swami Laxman Joo's Guidance

To what perceptively vigorous discipline he must have had to subject himself in going through the plethora of the other more serious scriptures would leave nobody guessing. The Kashmir Shaivism (Trika) had been his cherished subject of study under the guidance of the contemporary authority then-Swami Ishwarswaroop Laxman Joo Maharaj. Kamalji had an intensive study of the Upanishads., Purans, Bhagwad Geeta and all other scriptures. Astavakra Samhit, Vivekacudamani, Bartrahari's Vairagy-Satkam, among others, appeared to be his main attractions for the routine study. He would often quote extensively from these scriptures/books during discussions. His ten-aged grandson, Mrinal, whom he had been grooming to take after him, in his obituarial note, has described his grandfather as a living dictionary. Certainly, he was an undisputed walking-talking, deliberating encyclopaedia of the prominent Hindu Shastras.

A genetic transmutation also must have played its role in shaping his destiny. His grandfather, Pt. Shiva Kaul, was an adroit Sanskrit scholar and seer. In the Introduction to the Translation of Akrandmangirya Shivastuti of Pt. Shiva Kaul, Kamalji says that "Shiva Kaul continued with his spiritual practices and pranayamas and, finally in preparation for taking up Sanyas, he performed a Yajna, probably Viraja Zhoma, in which he distributed his treasure of books among the Pandits who had performed the ritual free." In the same introduction, Kamalji mentions how he had, at a very young age, accidentally salvaged the moth-eaten pieces of the manuscript of This compilation from his

grandmother's room. That speaks volumes about his perseverance and thirst for knowledge.

The contribution made by Kamalji to the enrichment of the Kashmiri Hindu cultural ethos has quite deservedly received wide approbation. Starting with smaller compilations, he had bloomed into a matured scholar to produce a magnum-opus like commentaries on Bhawani Nama Sahsra Stuteih, Panc'astavi, Shiva Sutra Vimarsha, Sampanchashika, Parmarthsara, Vedant Dindimah and Indrakash Satotram.

Parmoo, Shambhu Nath : Born on Srinagar ed Matric, Hakim Hazak m Kamla 1942; founder-mem; Mahila Mahavidyala Srinagar since 1942, Gen-Secy All J & K Tibbi Conf since 1948; founder-Secy J & K Rashtra Bhasha Prachar Samiti since 1956, running 4 libraries, free Hindi to type-writing classes, 52 centres having taught Hindi to over 21,000 citizens including about 6,500 Muslims; mem: Central Hindi Shiksha Samiti; connected with various social organizations.

Raina, A. K. : Born on July 27, 1937 Srinagar ed Matric 1954, trained in wood, ivory carving at School of Arts Trivandrum 1954-58 m Sheela 1959; inspired by colourful applique work at Anantnag Caves when a child; took keen interest in handicrafts as student; started painting 1965; participated annual State exhibitions. Academy of Fine Arts Calcutta 1968, All-India Fine Arts & Crafts Society 1969; won J & K State exhibition awards 1967, 69.

Raina, A. N. : Born on Nov 1910 Srinagar ed BA LLB(Lko)m Sham Rani 1930; founder-member Kashmir Youngmen's Club 1929 which was declared unlawful by Govt 1931; joined Anantnag Muffasil Bar 1933, Srinagar High Court Bar 1939; associated with National Conference since 1939; a defence counsel to Sheikh Abdullah, others in "Quit Kashmir" movement 1946; member Advisory Committee Food, Transport, Internal Security and Legal Reforms committee 1948; Public Prosecutor Srinagar 1948-63; member Central Executive and President Zonal Committee Citizens Council 1965; Advocate General since 1968; took keen interest in co-op movement; was Director Kashmir Peoples Co-op Store and Central Co-op Bank Ltd Srinagar; member Managing Committee DAV Higher Secondary School etc; addressed State Assembly for first time in its history on definition and scope of Money Bill Oct 1969.

Thusu, A. N. : Born on July 29, 1921 Srinagar ed BA (Pb) BSc (Hons) Engg (Patna) m Raj Lakshmi 1939; joined Govt PWD after standing first in interview held by Board of Engineers May 1946; worked in various capacities from Asst Engineer to Chief Engineer as at present; completed Sindh Hydrel Scheme Ganderbal inaugurated by late President Dr Rajendra Prasad 1955; prepared Master Plan for Flood Control Drainage, Reclamation & Soil Conservation 1958, worked in Lower Jhelum Hydrel Project Baramulla 1964-66, now

working as Chief Project Engineer Upper Sindh Hydel Project; full member Institution of Engineers, M.I.E (India) since 1964, has written number of papers.

Wattal, Nand Lal : Born on Aug 2, 1916 ed BA SP College Srinagar ; Journalist , Asst Editor 'Hamdard' 1939-46, Editor 'Navayug' 1946-49, Daily 'Khidmat' since 1949.

Saraf Sham Lal : Born on July 4, 1904 Srinagar ed CMS High School and S.P College, Srinagar m Gunwati 1923: student leader: reorganized Dharam Prakash Mandal Rainawari to secretly train youth for revolutionary work: joined Dogra Sabha when it ment in Srinagar 1924 under chairmanship of late Justice Jia Lal Kilam: senior vice president Sanatan Dharam Yuvak Sabha 1931-36: founder-president Hindu Progressive Party 1937 on Gandhian lines: later dissolved it as Sheikh Abdullah and Muslim Conference were preparing for establishing National Conference: imprisoned along with other leaders for voicing "National Demand" 1938: treasurer NC 1941-66: arrested during 'Quit Kashmir' 1946: Cabinet Minister 1947-62: MP 1962-67: now chairman N C Since 1966

Bhan R.K.Dr : Born on April 20, 1904 Srinagar ed MA (Pb). Ph.D (Lond) m Chandravati 1916; educationist; was Prof Economics, Principal Colleges, Dir Economics Intelligence Statistics (Economic Adviser) Jammu & Kashmir Govt; then Asst Economic: Statistical Adviser Union Finance Ministry Head of Economic Affairs Sec External Affairs Ministry, Adviser (Edu) Ministry of Community Dev.Register Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, Consultant United Nations ECAFE Bangkok; retired as Dy Educational Adviser GOI, now consultant & Chairman the Parh Finder Fund India (Hq USA): dealt with teaching, research, educational, social welfare problems; contributed to building of Extension Services in teachers training institutions; represented India at several conferences: examiner Ph.D D Litt exams; addressed Varsity Convocations: was President All India University & College Teachers Assn: Chairman Forum of Edu New Delhi, Vice President International Study & Science Exchange, mem; Society for Promotion of Education in India, India International Centre New Delhi; now President All India Fed of Education Assns. Mem; Committee Population Council of India, Academic Council Delhi University: knows Eng. Pliersian, Sanskrit, Urdu, Hindi,

Bhat Janki Nath : Born on Feb 28, 1910 Murran (Anantnag) ed BA Hons, MA LLB; merit scholarship holder throughout; was Secretary College Literary Association, Section Commander, Captain Cricket XI; won allround best prize and gold medal; stood third in Pb Varsity Hons; beat previous record Lucknow Varsity MA; practiced at Shopian Bar 12 years, was also Vice-President Town Area Committee, President Food Control Board, member NC, returned to Praja Sabha 1947 from Hindu Rural Constituency extending from Lower Manda upto Kohala; founded National High School and was its President when shifted to Srinagar for practice 1948; returned to State Assembly after sharp contest with Mr.Mohd Shafi Qureshi (now Union Dy Minister) 1962; remained MLA till

elevated to Bench as Judge Jammu & Kashmir High Court April 26, 1963; was member Gen Council National Conf, Senior Vice-President Kashmiri Pandit Sabha, Trustee National and Rattan Rani Hospitals, Vice-President Gandhi Memorial College etc.

N.D.Radha Krishen : The oldest Transporters and Pioneers of the Motor Transport Industry in Kashmir.

Langar Niranjan Lal : Born on Nov 1879 ed Under Graduate m Suraj 1899; joined State Council Sectt as Clerk 1900, by dint of hard & honest work rose to the position of Governor Ladakh and Jt Central Asian Trade Commissioner 1928; now leading life as 'Banparast'. Pub: 'Shah Rai Daulat'.

Raina S.K. : Born on Aug 24, 1918 m Dr.Shanta 1951; took active part in "Quit Kashmir" movement; joined State service April 1, 1948; held posts like Jammu & Kashmir Transport Commr, Trade Commr New Delhi; now Secy Tourism, Labour.

Reh Vasudev : Born on Nov 26, 1927 Sopore ed Bhushan; became blind at age of 2. Kashmir poet, musician. Pub: 'Shab Carud'

Vaishnavi, Gobind Lal Dr. : Born on Nov.1899; joined service as Asst Surgeon after passing MBBS Punjab Varsity 1925; deputed to Great Britain for higher studies 1927, returned after passing DOMS (Lond). Dlorcp & S (Eng), FRCS (Edin), FRFPS (Glas): joined Saddar Hospital Srinagar as Surgeon and Eye. ENT Specialist; Chief Medical Officer 1935. Asst Director Health Serives 1941. later Palace Surgeon. Appointed Director Medical Serives 1943 in which capacity he steup net-work of health units, dispensaries, tehsil and district hospitals and established two big modern hospitals one each at Srinagar, Jammu; retired 1948; appointed Asst Director General Health Serivces. Union Health Ministry 1950; Chief Medical Officer Calcutta Post Trust 1952-57; reemployed by State Govt Superintendent –cum-Administrator SMHS Hospital Srinagar 1961-62.

Wakhloo S.N. Dr. : Born on Aug 23.1908 Srinagar ed MSc (Geology) 1930, Ph D (Pb) 1946, FGS m Kamala 1926; Geologist with lessee of Soomjam Sapphire Mines at Paddar 1937-40, Tata Iron and Steel Co.Ltd Jamshedpur 1946-50: taught Petrology, Economic Geology Patn a Varisty 1950-59; Prof & Head Post-Graduate Deptt Jammu & Kashmir Varsity since Sept 1959; worked as Dean Faculty Science Jammu & Kashmir Varsity 3 years; corroborating with vital bodies such as Programming Board for Mineral Investigations in State, Programme Advisory Committee Jammu Radio; was member

Executive Councils Indian Geoscience Association and Geochemical Society of India; now member Council of Indian Institute of Geological Association; published about 27 Papers on Stratigraphy, Petrology and Economic Geology.

Wazir Manmohan : Born on Nov 15, 1926 Srinagar ed BA (Hons) MA (Eng) MA (Econ) LLB (NDC) m Kanta 1949; served Jammu & Kashmir Police in various capacities, now DIG Anti-Corruption: IPS, did commendable work in Poonch-Rajouri sector during Indo-Pak conflict 1965. Pub: History of the Jammu & Kashmir Police.

Zadoo Vasu Dev : Born on Aug 15, 1898 Srinagar ed MSc Chem (Pb) 1926 MSc Sanitary Engg (Harvard) 1931, admitted to National Soc of Tau, Beta Pi (USA) followed by one year training in England m Devki alias Svarna Mala 1908; started career after BSc as teacher High School Samba, later Demonstrator Jammu College then SP College Srinagr; was college Rover Scout Master , Jt Secy “Socitey for promoting scientific knowledge”. Asst Engr State PWD after MSc (Lahore) 1926 and return from UK 1931; retired as DE but re-employed till 1958 as Supdt Engr. Principal Kashmir Polytechnic; now Consulting Engr Jammu & Kashmir Financial Corpn. National Grindlays Bank Srinagar; amongst early social reformers; played significant role during tribal raid 1947; lost son Lt.Pushkar in action at Teetwar July 1948; was Chairman Jammu & Kashmir Centre Institution of Engineers (India) 2 terms, now its mem; Pub: Various scientific papers.

Eminent Professionals

Prof.R.K.Bhan : He was teaching Economics in Amar Singh College, Srinagar as Principal of the College. He later joined the Union Finance Ministry and retired as a Deputy Secretary. Subsequently, he also served as Registrar of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Powai, Mumbai.

Prof.J.N.Bhan : He taught Political Science in Amar Singh College, Srinagar and later joined the State Government as Director of Information and retired as Vice Chancellor of the Jammu University.

Prof.P.N.Chaku : He was teaching Economics in Amar Singh College and later joined the State Government as Finance and Planning Secretary.

Prof.N.L.Darbari : Professor Darbari had a noble and innocent being. A renowned teacher of organic Chemistry, he would teach the subject like it was so easy. He had the capacity to laugh at himself and would not mind students laughing at his small Idiosyncrasy. He was very popular with students.

Prof.S.L.Dhar : Although a science graduate he did his M.A in English, but started his career as a Demonstrator in physics. Eventually, with no prospects of promotion, he was forced to switch to teaching of English as a lecturer.

Prof. P.N.Dhar : He taught Economics in S.P.College and later joined the Delhi School of Economics. He was Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi in seventies and later joined the United Nations as a Deputy Secretary General.

Prof Somnath Dhar : He was teaching English in S.P.College. he fled the Valley in 1947 and finally retired as First Secretary Press, External Affairs Ministry.

Prof. J.L.Kaul : He was first teaching English in Prince of Wales College, Jammu and later the Amar Singh College, Srinagar. Started as a junior Professor of English and was contemporary of Prof.Thusu. He retired as the Principal of the Amar Singh College.

Prof. J.N.Kaul : He was also teaching English in S.P.College. a renowned teacher and Professor of English literature. Taught at the Amar Singh College, Srinagar in the later part of his career. He shared a wide range of interests with his students whom he inspired. His devotion to duty was well known.

Prof.B.K.Madan : One of the senior most Professors of S.P. College. He was a man loved by all students. His subject was history and he taught under graduate classes. He also had a good command of English and was engaged as private tutor to Karan Singh by his father Maharaja Hari Singh. Dr.Karan Singh later on became the Sadar-i-Riyasat of J & K, its Governor and later a Union Minister.

Shivji 'Middle' : First Kashmiri Pandit who had passed his Middle examination, thus his family surname became 'Middle'.

Dr.K.L.Nadir : He was awarded a doctorate by the Lucknow University and taught for a number of years Political Science at the Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi.

Prof. R.C.Pandita : He was the senior most Professor of the English of the only college (S.P.College) of Kashmir during thirties and forties of the 20th century. Well known in the valley for his superb command of English. Many of his students reached great heights in various professions. Later on, shifted Amar Singh College and retired from there. Wore a “Pagree” and sherwani throughout his life.

Shankar Pandit : Head Master of the Mission School, Fateh Kadal, was a pioneer of education in Jammu and Kashmir. C.E.Tyndel Biscoe used to say, “What Shankar does not know, does not exist”.

Prof.S.L.Pandit : He was a lecturer in English, reportedly groomed by Prof.R.C.Pandita. After 1990 writes frequently for Koshur Samachar. He was gifted writer and wrote profusely on various topics of academic, cultural and historic interest. Earlier as a college and university teacher he will be remembered by many of his students in whom he inspired an enthusiasm for the study of English literature. Later, he moved to Amar Singh college, from where he retired.

Prof.M.S.Qazi : A senior Professor of the forties, he was very sober person given to few words.

Prof. P.N.Qazi : He was also teaching English in S.P.College and later became P.A. to Director of Education.

Prof.S.L.Raina : He was teaching Botany in S.P.College and retired as the Principal of the college.

Prof.A.N.Raina : He taught Geography in S.P.College. Author of “Geography of Jammu and Kashmir”.

Dr.G.L.Sapru : He taught Political Science for nearly 20 years at the Maulana Azad College at Jammu and was later Principal of Government College at Bhadrwah where he died suddenly of heart attack in 1975. Author of “Nehru, the outsider”.

Prof.S.L.Sadhu : He taught English in S.P.College and in Amar Singh College and served as Principal Bhadrwah, Sopore and Baramulla Colleges before his retirement.

Dr.M.K.Taing : An alumni of the Lucknow University, he taught for a number of years at Kashmir University. Has written a number of books on Kashmir.

Prof.S.N.Thusu : Junior Professor of English in S.P.College. A former student (N.N.Moza) recalls that he was very efficient in his job and a great disciplinarian. After retirement, he was appointed as the first principal of Islamia College at Srinagar. He had a very good circle of friends who were holding some important top ranking positions in the Government such as Messrs. S.L.Dhar, who served a secretary to J & K Government before 1947, D.N.Munshi also secretary to Government and D.N.Kak who retired as Principal Government college Kapurthala .

Prof.S.K.Toshkhani : He was teaching Philosophy first in the Prince of Wales College, Jammu and then in Amar Singh College, Srinagar. Besides being Professor of Hindi, he was a member of Theosophical society of India started by Mrs. Annie Besant. He lived in the Gankhan Mohalla in downtown Srinagar where the famous film director of India Ramanand Sagar lived.

Prof.N.L.Talib : He was the first and the last Kashmiri Pandit Professor of Persian language in the forties and taught in S.P.College.

Prof.N.L.Wazir: A quiet and dignified teacher, professor of inorganic and physical chemistry. Although he had a degree in law, he stuck to teaching all his life. Students loved him. He joined as a junior lecturer and gradually became a professor, having taught both in S.P.College as well as the newly opened Womens' College, former students remember him with gratitude.

Kachru, Braj B : Prof of Linguistics, Univ of Illinois ; b 15 May 32, at Srinagar; s of Shyam Lal & Tulsi Devi; m, Yamuan; one s,one d; Ed; Ph.D (Edinburgh); Head of Dept of Linguistics, Univ of Illionis, 69-79, Dir, 85-91; Pres, American Assn for Applied Linguistics, 84 (Vice – Pres, 83); Chairperson, Cttee on Hon Members, Linguistic Soc of America, 87; Associate, Centre for Advanced Study, UI-Uc, 71-72, 79-80, 88; Fellow, East – West Centre, Honolulu, Hawali, 82,84,85; Consultant, The Ford Foundation, 73,74; visiting Prof, Natl Univ of Singapore, 84; publs; Current Trends in Stylistics (co

ed); an introduction to spoken Kashmiri (2 parts); Aspects of Sociolinguistics in South Asia (co ed); Kashmiri Literature; The Indianisation of English; The English Language in India; The Alchemy of English; The Spread Functions and Models of Non-native English; The Other Tongue; English Across Cultures; Associate Ed, The Oxford Companion.

Shah, Gobind Lal

With the passing away on October 17, 1997 in Noida (UP), of Pandit Gobind Lal Shah, Kashmir has lost an eminent and reputed educationist. Shri Shah was born at Sheilteng, Habba Kadal in Srinagar on March 20, 1906 at a time when western style education was being imparted for the first time to the young men of Kashmir. His family was steeped in traditional Shastraic knowledge, which enabled him at a later stage to choose science and mathematics as his subjects for higher studies. In 1927 he completed his science graduation from the Punjab University, Lahore holding a top rank. Immediately afterwards he was employed in the State education service as a teacher. In 1934 he was selected by the State government for study of the Bachelor of Teaching degree at the Banaras Hindu University.

He passed this examination with distinction in 1935. In 1937 he was posted as Headmaster to Government School, Leh. It was here that he developed a sense of social justice having seen for himself the indignities and tribulations suffered for want of education by the local population. He was fortunate enough to be associated there with Late Pt. Shridhar Koul Dulloo, one of the renowned educationists of our state. It was through the efforts of these two well-meaning educationists that Young Men's Buddhist Association of Ladakh first came into existence and the people were made conscious of the evils of polyandry then prevalent there. The Maharaja's government was obliged to formulate social legislation favouring social change and justice among the Ladakhis.

Soon after 1947 Pakistani invasion of Kashmir, he was posted to Baramulla where he was instrumental by his words of wisdom and practical experience in bringing comfort and solace to the student sufferers. In 1950 the then National High School was taken over by the state government and he was posted as its first Headmaster. He spared no effort in converting the school into one of the leading institutions of the Valley.

He also served as Headmaster of High Schools at Basholi (Jammu) and Bijbehara (Kashmir). In 1959 he was promoted as one of the first district inspectors of schools and was posted to Ladakh where he continued in that capacity till his retirement in 1961. During his stay in Ladakh he was instrumental in establishing for the first time educational institutions in far-flung areas of Nobra, Chushul, Zanskar and Drass. After retirement from government, his services were utilized by Roopa Devi Sharda Peeth (founded by late Pt. Parmanand Ji) as Headmaster and Principal of R.D. Sharda Peeth High School at Raghunath Mandir, Srinagar till 1973.

Shri Shah was a born educationist and was steeped in self-discipline and human values. His numerous former students some of whom, because of his honest persuasions and encouragement have risen to top administrative and academic positions in the country and abroad will authenticate this. We may count Shri Ravi Tikoo, Mr.K.H.Khursheed, Shri D.V.Batra, Mir Rajpuri and Lt.Gen.Atal among his former students.

As a young man he was much influenced by his deeply religious mother Smt.Sati and by the teachings of Parmahans Shri Ramakrishna, Aurobindo Gosh, Raman Maharashi, Paul Brenton, Rabindra Nath Tagore, Sadhu T.L. Vaswani and Bhagwan Shri Gopinath Ji. Some of us who were his students recall how he used to instill in us a sense of nationalism and patriotic farvour by his repeated references to the achievements of men like Garibaldi, Abraham Lincoln, Mahatma Gandhi and Bhai Parmanand.

Shri Shah received his first lessons in Shaiva Shastras from Pt.Mahanad Ji Pandit of Rainawari, Srinagar and Pt.Mukund Ji Razdan of Habba Kadal, Srinagar. His understanding of Kashmir Shaivism is duly acknowledged by Pt.Nilkanth Kotru in his English translation of 'Shivastotravali'. He led a simple and pious life and never wasted his time in idle talk. He visited Auroville, Pondicherry and Raman Ashram, Tiruvanamallai where he used to spend much time in study and meditation.

The disturbances in Kashmir after the events of January 1990 forced him to move to Delhi. He faced the trials and tribulations of migration, even though he was in his mid eighties, with fortitude and mental equipoise always praying for peace to return to Kashmir. Even in the midst of this adversity he continued to study the Gita and draw inspiration from it. All of us who are his former students pay him our tribute and remember him for his unique art of conversation and emphasis on following a life of simplicity, truth and dedication.

Hira Lal Ganjoo, Koshur Samachar, February 1998.

Warikoo, Kulbhushan: Associate Prof, Central Asian Studies, JNU, since 87; b 1 Feb 51, at Srinagar; s of Gopinath Warikoo; m, Usha; one s, one d ; Ed: B.Sc., MA, M.Phil, Ph.D: Dip in Lib Science; started career in Dept of Inf., J&K Govt, 72: founder Sec, Himalayan Research & Cultural Foundations; participated in numerous nati and intl conferences; pub: Comprehensive Bibliography on Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh; Central Asia and Kashmir; Ethnicity and Politics in Central Asia; mem: Intl Comm on Science and Research for Asia, Intl Assn for Tibetan Studies, India Intl Centre; recd UNESCO Awd, 92;

Talib, Nand Lal Kaul : Born on Dec.25, 1899 Srinagar, ed MA MOL Hons Persian Urdu M Lilavati 1919; Urdu poet, scholar, chtiic; worked as Lecturer, Professor, Head of the Department of Persian, Urdu S.P.College Srinagar, as college Srinagar and GM College Jammu for about 30 years; then appointed convener Urdu Advisory Committee, later Editor, State Cultural Academy; elected Dean Faculty of Oriental Learning J & K Varsity 1954 – 57, member Executive Committee Jamia Urdu Aligarh 1961 – 64,

member Urdu Advisory Committee AIR New Delhi 1965 and 1968. Pub: 'Taswir-i-Qaum', 'Rashhat-ul-Takhhayul' etc.

Parmanand Darinder : Born on Dec 6, 1893 Ranyil (Ganderbal) ed MA (Math) m July 1916; retired Accountant General; first class first MA (Math) Govt College Lahore 1917; Examiner and Member Board of Honours School of Mathematics Punjab Varsity for some years, Prof Mathematics SD College Lahore 1917-19, Prof Mathematics PW College Jammu 1919-28, passed higher departmental exam of India Audit and Accounts Service at Nagpur after one year's training there; Deputy AG 1930-31; Finance and Development Secretary 1931-32; Accountant General April 1, 1944 to Oct 21, 1948 (first Kashmiri to hold this post), was also Chairman Pay Commission; Founder-President Shri Rupa Devi Sarada Peetha College for Women Srinagar.

Atal, Dr. Yogesh : Social Science Adviser for Asia & Pacific, UNESCO, since 74; b 9 Oct 37, at Udaipur (Rajasthan); s of Daulal Ram & Kesar; m. Seema, one s, three d; Ed: MA, PhD, D. Sc; specialization in research methodology & Political sociology; taught at Saugar Univ, 59-60, Punjab Univ, 60-61, Inst of Social Science, Agra Univ, 61-68, IIT, Delhi, 68-71, Dir, Ind Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi, 71-74; mem; Ind Sociologist Soc, Current Anthropology; publs; Adivasi Bharat (65); Urban Reaction to Sino Indian Conflict (67); The Changing Frontiers of Caste (68); Local Communities and National Politics (71); Samajshasthra; Ek Vidhivat Vivechan (Translation in Hindi) (71); Social Sciences in Asia (74); Ek Bharatiya Gram (Translation in Hindi) (75); Asian Rethining on Development (76); Social Sciences; The Indian Scene (76); Social Sciences; The Indian Scene (76); Social Sciences in Agricultural Education (ed) 82; Building a Nation; Essays on India (81); Women in Villages, Men in Towns (ed) (84); Middle East Interlude; Asian Workers Abroad (86); Daulat Darbar (89); Toot Ki Kavityayen (89); Sociology & Social anthropology in Asia & The Pacific (ed) (85); awd, Albert Einstein Intl Acad Foundation Awd, 91, Alred Nobel Medal.

Kaul, Hari Krishen : Librarian, India Intl Centre, New Delhi, since 67; b 21 Dec 41, at Srinagar; s of K.N. Kaul & Durga ;m, Kamal; one d; Ed: B.Sc., B. Lib Sc: Project Dir of various literary projects sponsored by GOI: publ; Sri Aurobindo : A Descriptive Bibliography 72; Early Writings on India, 75; Urdu Manuscripts, 78; Travellers India-an anthology, 79; Co-author Periodicals in Humanities 73; Handbook for Ind Writers 75; Travels in South Asia 79; A New Journey- Poems & a number o mimeographed reports; Sec Gen. Afro-Asian Bureau of Translation. Since March 82; Chmn: Research LIB Cttee, Ind Lib Assn.

Kaula, Prithvi Nath : Emeritus Fellow Prof, UGC, since 85; b 13 March 24, at Srinagar (Kashmir); s of Damodhar; m, Asha; five children; Ed: MA, M.Lib, Sc, Dip Lib Sc; Librarian, D.A.V College, Srinagar, 44-47, Ch Librarian, 48-50, Librarian, Delhi

Congress, Delhi, 50-51, in Min of Labour & Employment, GOI, 51-58, Reader, Dept of Library Science, Delhi Univ, 58-60, Univ Librarian and Head of Dept of Library Science, Banaras Hindu University, 60-67, 68-71, Prof & Head 71-74, Prof & Head of Department, 75-84; Dean, Faculty of Arts, 79-81; Emeritus Prof, Kasi Vidyapeeth and Lucknow Univ; Visiting Prof, 36 univs of India and more than 24 foreign univs; UNESCO expert, Regional Centre in W Hemisphere, Havana, Cuba, 67-68; life mem; Ind Library Assn, Ind Assn of Spl Libraries & Inf Centre, Delhi Lib Assn, UP Library Assn; Pres, Ind Assn of Teachers of Library and inf Science, 73-85, Fed of Ind Lib Assn, 66-83; Chmn, Council of Literacy & Adult Ed; Expert mem of National & Intl bodies like FID, IFLA, ISO, UNESCO; Natl Lib, Calcutta, Review Cttee UGC, ISI, Bureau for Promotion of Urdu, Lib Science Terminology Cttee; Raja Ram Mohan Roy Foundation, 79-82, Natl Policy on Lib & Inf System, 83-86; Chmn, Panel on Lib & Inf Science (UGC); Patron; Ind Assn of Teachers of Lib and Inf Science, Ind College of Lib Assn, Music Acad, Lib Council; Mg Editor, Annals Bulletin and Granthalaya of Ind Library Assn, 49-53; Editor; Sarada, 53-55, Library Herald, 58-61; Herald of Library Science, since 62, Granthalaya Vijnana, since 70; International Information, Communication and Education, since 82; Progress in Library and Information Science, 79-83; author of 58 books & 43 Bibliographies, over 300 Tech papers, 400 books reviews and over 2 dozens dev plans; Honoured by Intl Festschrift Cttee in 74 and 82; awd; Pro Mundi Beneficio Medal from Brazilina Academy of humanities, 75, Ind Library Movement Awd, 74, Plaque from Intl Biographical Centre, Cambridge, Deutsche Bucherei Medal, 81, Intl Roll of Honour Plaque, 82, Gold Medal of Honour, 87 from USA, estd Kaula Edowment for Lib & Inf Science, 75.

Fotedar, Dr.D.N. : Prof of Zoology & Head of Post graduate Dept of Zoology, Kashmir Univ. since 69; b 15 Oct 23, at Srinagar (Kashmir); s of S.S. Fotedar; m. Lakshmi; two s: Ed: Msc., Aligarh, M.Sc., Ph.D., London; Prof & Head of Zoology Dept, S.P. College, Srinagar. Zoological Soc of Ind. Helminthological Soc of India (its vice-pres), Academy of Zoology; mem; Ind Science scientific Assn. Nematological Soc of India; awd. Bhalerao Gold Medal, 78; publs, 105 research papers: participated in 3rd and 4th ICOPA at Munich 74 and Warshaw 78; visiting Prof Acad, Sc., U.S.S.R. (71-79).

Nadim, Dina Nath : Principal, L.M. Higher Secondary School, Srinagar, since 40; b 16 March 16, at Habba Kadal (Kashmir); s of Shankara Kaul & Sundari; m, Padmini: two s, three d; Ed: BA, BT: Gen Sec, Kashmir Cultural Congress, 49-53, Kashmir Peace Council, 50-53, All Jammu Kashmir & Ladakh Teachers Fedn, since 55; Chmn, Kashmir National Theatres, 60-65; Mem: J & K Acad of Arts, Cultural & Languages, State Legislative Council, 57-63; received Soviet Land Nehru Awd, 70, Kalhana Awd, 84, Sahitya Akad Awd, 86 for Shihil Kul.

Saqi, Motilal Razdan : Ed, Encyclopedia Kashmirian; b 4 Sept 36. At Badiyar (Kashmir); s of Madsoodan Razdan & Gunfi; m, Permeshvari; four s: Ed: BA; was for some time on the staff of AIR, joined Cultural Acad, 73; has published 20 books and 150 research articles in Kashmiri, Hindi, Punjabi, Pahari and Urdu; contributed 188 entries to

Encyclopedia Kashmirian and 60 entries to Encyclopedia of Ind Literature; Asst Editor, Kashmiri Dictionary, has translated Raj Tarangni, Iqbal's poetry and John Keats' in Kashmiri; received Sahitya Akad Awd, 81, State Akademi Awd, 80; Mem; PEN, Sahitya Akad Advisory Board, 78-82, Kashmir Cultural Organization, Awd twice by Central Ministry of Ed, Padma Shri, 89: represented Kashmiri Rashtriya Kavi Sammelan.

Iqbal Narain : Vice Chancellor, North East Hill Univ; b 4 April 30, at Jaipur; s of Raj Narain; m, Asha ; two s, two d: Ed: MA, Ph. D: lecturer, Agra College, Udaipur, 60-61; Reader, Univ of Raj, 60-67; Prof, 68-80; V.C. Univs of Raj and BHU, 80-85; Mem Sec, Ind Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi, 85; UGC Natl Lecturer, 71-72; participated in many Natl and Intl conferences, seminars and symposia; Mem; Intl Pol Sc Assn, American Pol Sc Assn, India Intl Centre, IIPA; Publ: Fom Dyarchy to Self Government; Politics of Racialism in South Africa (62); Twilight or Dawn; Political Change in India (1967-71) (72); co-author; Panchayati Raj in Rajasthan (66); Pattern of Urban Rural Relationship (67); Panchayati Raj Administration; Old Controls and New Challenges (70); contributed many articles in natl and intl journals.

Haksar, Vinit Narain: Reader, Edinburgh Univ, Edinburgh (UK), since 80; b 4 Sept 37, at Vienna; s of Sundar Haksar; divorced; two s, one d; Ed: BA (Delhi), BA (Oxon), MA, D. Phill; lecturer, St Andrews Univ, UK, 62-69, Edinburgh University, 69-80; John Milton Scott Visiting Prof, Queens Univ, Kingston, 82; Visiting Prof, Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, 74; mem; Aristotelian Soc, American Philosophical Assn; Fellow, Royal Soc of Edinburgh; publ: Equality, Liberty and Perfectionism (79); Civil Disobedience, Threats and Offers (86); Indivisible Selves (91).

Madan, Dr. Bal Krishna; b 13 July 11, at Sahowala (Punjab); s of Shiv Ram & Jamna; m Savitri; four s: Ed: M.A., Ph.D.; Econ Adviser, Punjab Govt, 40-41, Dir of Research, RBI, Bombay, 41-46, Alternate Exec Dir, International Monetary Fund, 46-48, & International Bank for Reconstruction & Development, 47-48, & International Bank for Reconstruction & Development, 47-48, Exec Dir, International Monetary Fund, 48-50, 67-71; Econ Adviser, RBI, 52, mem: Finance Comm, GOI 51-53, Tazation Inquiry Comm, GOI, 53-54; Principal Adviser. RBI. 57, Exec Dir 59, Dep Governor, 64; Chmn: Bonus Review Cttee, 72-74, Management Development Inst, New Delhi 73-80. M.P. Consultancy Organization Ltd, since 79; mem: Ind Econ Assn (its pres, 61), Ind Econ Assn (its pres, 61), Ind Soc of Agricultural Econ (its pres, 57), Soc of International Development.

Prof.P.N.Masaldan : Dr.P.N.Masaldan, former professor and Head Department of Political Science, and former Vice Chancellor of Jodhpur University, was a versatile personality, a teacher, a friend and a philosopher.

Born, brought up and educated at Lucknow, Prof. Masaldan had been one of the brightest members of the Faculty of Arts, in the post independence era, and with whose presence the university could boast of a learned teacher. He worked for his Ph.D this under the great Political Scientist, Professor V.S.Ram.

At Lucknow university, he proved what discipline is and how the affairs of that office should be governed. Yet, despite his strictness, he was held in high esteem because he was so meek and humble and so docile otherwise. Moreso, because the Professor never believed in passing the buck and personally took the brunt of the responsibility that went with the deanship.

In his academic pursuits, he excelled in International Relations and has to his credit a number of publications including ‘Studies in Political Philosophy ‘; ‘Evolution of Provisional Autonomy in India 1858 – 1950’; ‘Planning in Uttar Pradesh’, ‘Planning and the people’, ‘Ranjitishastra ke Siddhanta’. After his retirement, he took up an assignment at the Centre of American studies, Hyderabad. He was also a member of the UPSC panel for civil services.

Dr.P.N.Mattoo.

Engineers

Suyya – the engineer

Country of famine brought about by floods. While the people watched in puzzlement, Suyya dropped pots of gold coins into the river Veth at certain specific points where its choked current overflowed its banks. Excited at the thought of gold prospecting, people dived into the river, rummaging its bed, pulling out in the process boulders that impeded its flow, and piling up masses of mud, slush, and stone on the banks. Thus was the riverbed dredged, its muck drained and bunds built. Liberated, the river flowed out in a faster current to the Wular lake.

Suyya also altered the course of the Veth, preventing it from meeting the Sindh at Trigom, thus saving a large area from turning into a swamp.

Rajiv Sapru, Vitasta, (Kashmir – A Glimpse in time) (1998-99) .

Shishoo, Mohan Lal : Chmn & Mg Dir, Bombay Suburban Electric Supply Ltd, since 88; b 27 Oct 29, at Srinagar; s of Jagan Nath; m, Shanta; ones, one d; Ed: BA, BE; served MSEB in various capacities, 54-84; Dir, NTPC, 84; Chmn & Mg Dir, 85-87; was instrumental in planning, designing and executing major Gas Turbine Power Projects in the country; Awd: recd Meridian Awd, 86; Diamond Jubilee awd of Central Board of irrigation & Power, 88.

Raina, Dr Virindra Kumar; Tech Assistance Expert with the Govt. of Saudi Arabia, Riyadh, since 82; b 25 Nov 40, at Muzafarabad; s of Motilal Raina; m, Vinita; Ed: Ph.D. (London), DIC, B.Sc., Engg. Specialization in Design of concrete bridges & other structures (Civil Engg); worked with Consulting Engineers in London & Toronto & with an Ind contracting firm; mem; Inst of Civil Engineers, London, Assn of Professional Engrs. Ontario, Ind Roads Congress, empanelled as a consultant with Asian Development Bank, Manila & the UNDP, New York; publ many tech papers; awd gold medals & Commonwealth Scholarship; led Ind Consultancy delegation to Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania & Zambia, 80.

Bagati Chaman Lal : Dir (Personnel), Tehri Hydro Dev Corpn Ltd, New Delhi, since 89; b 16 June 39, at Srinagar; s of B.K. Bagatl ; m, Beena; one s, two Ed; Ed; BE; joined BHEL, 62, Gen Mgr, 87; specialisation in Hydro Power Generation.

Harkauli, Anand Narain : Consultant, Water Resources Development & Management; b 5 Feb 22, at Alwar (Rajasthan): s of R.N.Harkauli; m, Vidya; one s, one d; Ed:M.Sc. (Civil Engg). Master of Irrigation Engg, USA; Associate Prof. Civil Engg, Roorkee Univ, 58-62, 64-66, Ch.Engineer (Design & Research), 72-75; Fellow, Inst of Engineers (India); mem (Design & Research), Central Water Comm. 76.

Lambudar Nath Zutshi : He was a mining Engineer having studied Geology in his early years. He was perhaps one of the first to go to England and work there. He also married an English woman but never forgot his roots. Whenever he came to visit Kashmir, he would go to his ancestral house which was located by the river side.

He would be dressed not in a dressing gown but wearing a pheran and having a khrav on his feet and would cheerfully shout out a welcome to the wife of the Hanji (Boatman) and ask about her all about her children and her relatives. In this he was a complete contrast to Pandit R.C. Kak who also married an English woman. Kak was a man aloof, insular and totally self contained.

Manmohan Dhar

01-06-1921---21.01. 2009

While this narrative has stressed and named those who lived in the valley, not many who escaped to other places in India , and made a name for themselves, not find more than a passing mention. The reason is lack of information; In the case of the late Manmohan Dhar, while his roots were in the valley, he made a name for himself for his outstanding contribution to engineering. .A lot of his work is there for us to see, just as today Sreedharan is talked about in connection with the Delhi Metro.

“ ‘Manatoth was a philanthropist, a yogi and an incarnate. From his childhood, he was fondled by Kashmir’s beauty, love of uncles in a joint family, who were known for their robust outlook, their wit and humour and their readiness to fight for the weak. He grew up in an atmosphere of love and care by neighbours, in an environment where there were no dwindling lines between Hindus and Muslims.

“It was not surprising, therefore, that he could at the age of 81, recite Kashmiri poetry and folk songs in typical Kashmiri tunes, which he in younger years, sang in choruses, in the programmes presented by London Majlis in the UK and at the International Rural Youth Conference, held in Vienna in December, 1954, when he was asked to lead a cultural delegation, on behalf of India, to the conference, by the London Majlis.

“His love for music grew from his childhood nourished largely by his uncle, Pt. Vidh Lal Dhar, who set up a theatre: ‘Kashmir Theatrical Co.’ in Srinagar, state. Most of the musicians, who visited Kashmir during those days, used to visit their house and there were music sessions held in their honour, where they would themselves sing.

“He became an engineer and was married to a wonderful young lady who was a very beautiful person to look at and even more so, in heart and soul. As an engineer, he was conscientious, able, dedicated and honest to a fault. He went to the Imperial College of Science and Technology, London, where he completed his post-graduate studies in Structural Engineering and also developed an abiding relationship with Sri Karishna Menon.

“His engineering career in India reached heights of excellence and he made a mark in management, in standardization, in exports and in various fields of structural engineering. Manmohan Dhar rose to be the first Indian Chief Engineer, the first Indian General Manager and then the first Indian Managing Director of Messrs Braithwaite & Co. Ltd, Calcutta, employing 7,000 employees and one of the finest structural and mechanical engineering companies this side of Suez, engaged in and responsible for design, fabrication, supply and erection of steel bridges, including the Old Howrah Bridge and the recently constructed Hooghly bridge, till then, the third of its type in the world.

“ He was responsible for putting India on the wagon map of the world, against stiff competition from Belgium and Japan, when he was successful in securing a prestigious order from South Korea for eight-wheeler tank wagons, designed by him in 1967, almost from the hip-pocket of the Japanese.

“He also acted as Director of BBJ Construction Company and Bagirathi Construction Company, Advisor to NCAER for making proposals for steel economy, required by Pt. Nehru as Chairman of International Standardisation programs for rolled steel products, under the aegis of the United Nations. As Chairman of a number of industrial Divisions of the All-India Engineering Association (AIEI); as a member of the Working Groups of the Planning Commission and as a member of the official Indian delegation to the Indo-British Conference in London, and to the Indo-US Conference in Houston, Texas, USA, both on third country exports.

“His greatest reward has been his relationship with people. It became for him an aid to enfolding of his inner ‘self’ in which the basic ingredients have been love, mutual self respect and joy. His poems are outpourings of his inner personality and he believed in propagating joy through his relationship with people.

“In his own words: ‘There is a lot more and more interesting achievements and incidents in my life but it will border on immodesty if I have to talk about them now. Have enjoyed life all the way. To say that at the age of 81 is what makes me thank God, who helped me in not compromising my conscience and never to be mean or take advantage.’

“At the time of the 190 holocaust for Kashmiri Pandits, he gave funds, from his personal savings, for their upkeep and rehabilitation.”

R. K. Dhar, Koshur Samachar, February 2009.

Medicine

Prof. Dr. M.L. (Ghassi) : Dr. Pandit Anand Kaul was an eminent medical academician and retired as principal, Jhelum Valley Medical College in 1992. He was nationally known Anatomist, most revered teacher, and researcher to core. After doing his LMP & LCPS with honours, he graduated from Seth G.S. Medical College & KEM Hospital Bombay, where he started his surgical career. He assisted Dr. P.K. Sen in 1st cardiac transplant in Asia at KEM Bombay. Later he started his career in J&K University and first in state to dissect human body. His role in establishing medical college at Srinagar is well documented in medical annals of state. Later he wrote the first ever medical text from J&K in 1968 “Compendium of Anatomy, which ran into 2 editions. He was invited by Libya government as consultant to set up medical university at Berghazi where he was Chairman of Anatomy department. He has been a great guiding force to his student and us, thus made many a carrier. Encouraging his college Srinagar. He was respected & loved by his students who can be found in all seven continents of world.

In later life, after migration to Delhi in 1992, the problems and affairs of community were dear to his heart. He was vigorously involved with the affairs of Biradari at Vasundhara Enclave. He will always be remembered for the contributions that he made in academic field, community affairs and by those whose lives he touched. His compassion, integrity and commitment in every thing that he did, was par excellence. His life style, love, care and concern is a great treasure and guiding force to us all in our family.

Kaul, Kanwar Kishen : Prof & Head of Paediatrics Dept, Govt Med College, Jabalpur, since 71; b 13 Oct 32, at Srinagar (Kashmir), of Gwash Lal & Prakash Rani; m, Sheila;

two s; Ed: M.B. B.S., D.C.H., M.D., M.A.M.S., Lecturer, Dept of Paediatrics, M.G.M. Med College. Indore, 59-61; Fellow, Ind Academy of Paediatrics (mem of its executive board, 73-78); mem; Ass for Advancement of Med Ed, National Academy of Med Sciences, Ind Med Assn, Soc for Human Biology, published over 70"papers, received B.C. Roya Awd, 81.

Sapru, Dr.Rajendra Prakash : Prof & Head of Dept of Cardiology, P.G. Inst of Med Ed & Research; b 20 March 37. At Srinagar (Kashmir); s of A.N. Sapru & Prabhawati; m, Indira; three children; Ed: MBBS, MD, Ph.D., Univ of Edinburg; specialization in Cardio-Vascular diseases; House Physician, Registrar, Med College, Agra, 59-62, Ass Research Offcr, ICMR, 62-63, Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh & Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh & Royal PG Med School, London, 63-68; Asst Prof, P.G. Inst of Med Ed, 68-83, Assoc Prof, 83-86, Addl Prof, 86-90; Fellow, National Acad OF Med Sciences, 83; life mem; Assn of Physicians of India & Cardiological Soc of India; .

Bhat, Shyam Lal : Born on Sept 1902 Srinagar education Tabib-I-Hazik (Lahore) marriage 1914; Arabic, Persian scholar, learnt 'hikmat' from father when only 16; treated successfully several cases declared hopeless by doctors; was Personal Physician to late Maharaja Hari Singh, his PM Col Haskar; serving rich, poor alike; President Yunani Tribia Board J & K since 1967.

Peshin, S. N. Dr : Born on March 4, 1907 Srinagar ed FRCS m Rupawati 1930; Surgeon; FRCS from Edinburgh completed in 10 months; held position of merit throughout educational career, started as private practitioner, organised Kashmir National Hospital Srinagar with 3 others who later left, first private enterprise of its kind in State; associated with several educational, social institutions, played role in national movement, one of the 12 signatories of "National Demand" 1938, imprisoned; appointed Director Health Services J & K by first popular Govt 1947, later gave up office due to differences with leadership.

Dr. Gasha Lal Kaul : He was reputed to be the first Pandit Doctor to go to England to complete his FRCS which he did with great distinction. He was the first Pandit Director of Medical Services of the J & K State. A reputed physician he was highly respected for his diagnostic skills and ability.

Dr.Girdhari Lal Kaul : He was the younger brother of Gasha Lal and a Doctor in his own right having his own standing. He also completed his FRCS and was a prominent Doctor of Srinagar.

Dr. Omkar Nath Thusu : One of the most famous Doctors produced by the Pandit Community who suffered a personal tragedy when his car carrying members of his family caught fire and every one except himself were burned to death. The car had been returning from Khir Bhavani (Tula Mula) when the tragedy occurred. One of the victims in the car was his wife whose name was Rattan Rani. When he found himself alone, he decided to perpetuate her memory by starting a hospital in her name. Thus was born the Rattan Rani Hospital near Bandar Bagh.

Vaishnavi, Gobind Lal Dr. : B Nov 1899 ; joined service as Asst Surgeon after passing MBBS Punjab Varsity 1925 ; deputed to Great Britain for higher studies 1927, returned after passing DOMS (Lond), DLORCP & S (Eng), FRCS (Edin), FRFPS (Glas) ; joined Saddar Hospital Srinagar as Surgeon and Eye, ENT Specialst ; Chief Medical Officer 1935. Asst Director Health Services 1941, later Palace Surgeon, appointed Director Medical Services 1943 in which capacity he setup net-work of health units, dispensaries, tehsil and district hospitals and established two big modern hospitals one each at Srinagar, Jammu ; retired 1948; appointed Asst Director General Health Services, Union Health Ministry 1950 ; Chief Medical Officer Calcutta Post Trust 1952-57 ; re-employed by State Govt Superintendent-cum-Administrator SMHS Hospital Srinagar 1961-62.

Kaul, Saligram Dr (Lt Col) : Born on Dec 28, 1914 ed MBBS (pb)1937, MD FRCP (Lond); held Punjab Varwsity merit scholarship; stood first in Anatomy, Pathology, Forensic Medicine, ENT & Eye, Medicine, Surgery in various exams; won Prince of Wales Gold Medal (Bioloby), Neil Memorial Medal (Anatomy), Ramakrishna prize (Surgery), Bott-Roshanlal prize (Operative Surgery); served Army 1937-60; Prof and Head of Deptt of Medicine, Govt Medica College Srinagar 1961-65, Principal 1965-69, also Dean (Adm) SMHS Hospital, Dean Faculty of Medicine J & K Varsity; Director Health Services since 1969; member Indian Medical Council, Executive Council Association for Advancement of Medical Education India, President Kashmir Medical Council, life-fellow Association of Physicians of India. Pub: 32 papers on radio-active isotopes etc. Co-author 'Text Book of Medicine'.

Arts

Khosa, Kashmiri : Born on 1 Feb 40, at Lahore; s of Som Nath & Indirawati, m, Lakshmi; one s, one d; Ed: Dip in Art; held one – man shows at: Delhi Silpi Chakra, 66, Triveni Kala Sangam, 68,78, Shridhrani Art Gallery, 82, Jehangir Art Gallery, 84, Shridharani Galloery, N.Delhi, 86; participated in : Contemporary Ind Paintings to Belgium, Poland, Yugoslavia & Bulgaria, 73-74, Third Triennale India, 75, Fourth Triennale India, 78, Modern Ind Paintings , Washington, 82, Modern Ind Art, Tokyo, 84; Paintings in Collection at: Natl Gallery of Modern Art, N.Delhi, Min of External Affairs, J & Kashmir Cultural Acad, Lalit Kala Acad, Sahitya Kala Parishad, Ind Airlines and

many collections in US, UK, Switzerland, Mexico etc; recd Pres's Silver Plaque, 74, Natl Awd, 81.

Kaul, Bansi : Prof, Extension Dept, N.S.D., since 80; b 23 Aug 49; Ed; Graduated from National School of Drama, 73; has directed several plays, taken part in exhibition of paintings; held one-man shows of modern paintings, acted in plays; Art Dir for film chirman Dudi, Associated Dir for children's film, Chor Chor Chup Ja; received Awd for best dir, best designer, 74-75; U.P Sangeet Natak Acad Awd, certificate for best painting in exhibition in Jammu & Kashmir, 69-70.

Kaul, Manohar : B 21 Sept 25, at Srinagar; s of Kantha & Vanamali; m. Mohini; one s, five d; Ed: M.A. (Painting); Ind delegate & Chmn, 1st World Art Conference, 77, Intl Exhibition , AIFACS, 77, Exhibition, Lalit Kala Acad, 84-85; Editor, Art News, AIFACS; Awd, J&K Cultural Acad; mem; Adv Cttee, Fine Arts, Sahitya Kala Parishad, Delhi; Publs, Trends in Indian Painting, Kashmir-Hindu, Buddhist & Muslim Architecture

Kaul, Triloke : Dir, School of Designs, Jammu & Kashmir, since 57; b 18 Nov 25, at Srinagar (Jammu & Kashmir); s of Dinanath & Dhanwati; m, Mohini; one d; Ed: B.A, 44, Panjab, B.A (Fine Art) 57, Baroda; was a traveling salesman, Bombay, 46, sub-editor in a Lahore daily, 47, in Govt service in Uri, 49; was freelance artist, illustrator, decorator, before joining Baroda Univ, 52; regional sec for N of All – India Assn of Fine Arts, 49-50; mem; gen council of Lalit Kala Akademi, Jammu & Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture & Languages, 66-71. AIFACS, Bombay Art Soc, Bombay; received national awd, 61; has taken part in several all – India exhibitions, has held 15 one – man shows in various cities since 52.

Parimoo, Dr.Rattan : Prof & Head of Art History, M.S. Univ, Baroda, since 78; b June 36, at Srinagar (Kashmir); s of Dr.Amarnath & Soomavati; m, Naina; two d; Ed; MA (Painting), Dip in Museology, BA (Hons) in History of Art, London, Ph.D ; Lecturer in Art History, Faculty of Fine of Fine Arts, Baroda, 59-60, 63-66, Reader & Head of Dept of Art History, 66-75; Dean, Faculty of Fine Arts, M.S.Univ, Baroda, 75-81; Rockefeller Fellow, 73; UGC National Lecturer, 83-84; Jawaharlal Nehru Fellowship, 91-93; awd first prize in painting in annual exhibition of J & Kashmir Acad of Art & Culture, 66; publs: The Painings of the three Tagores – Abanindranath, Gaganendranath and Rabindranath Chronology and Comparative Study (73); Studies in Modern Indian Art (75); Jt author, Guide to Elephanta (77); Life of Buddha in Indian Vaishnavism in Indian Arts & Culture (jointly); Ellora Caves Sculpture & Architecture (87); Paintings of Rabindranath Tagore (89); Art of Ajanta; New perspectives (91).

Gopi Krishna :Born in June 1903 Gairoo ed Undergraduate m Roopwati 1925; joined as clerk Irrigation Dept 1923; President Low-paid Employees Assn J & K 1946; founder-President Samaj Sudhar Samiti 1946 advocating widow-marriage, abolition of dowry etc; took up refugees rehabilitation work 1947; retired voluntarily 1950; issued first booklet in verse (9 languages) 1952; President Kashmiri Hindu Action Committee 1967; visited Central Europe to propagate Yoga 1967; attended conf of scientists, religious representatives Germany 1969; founded research centre at Nishat Bagh to conduct experiments on "Doctrine of Kundalini". Pub: 'Kundalini-The Evolutionary Energy in Man' 1967, 'The Shape Of Events To Come' 1968.

Civil Service (Karkun)

Mattoo, Prediman Kishen : B 27 Sept 29, at Srinagar (J.K); s of N.L. Mattoo & Padmawati; m, Raj Karni; one s, one d; Ed: BA (Hons), B.Sc. (Engg) D.Sc.; Asstt Engr., J & K Govt., 52-56, Dep Commr, Dir of Industries, Commr and Sec, H.P. Govt, 63-77, Jt Sec, GOI, 77-81, Proj Dev Adviser, C Wealth Fund for Tech Coop, Meseru, Lesotho, 81-84, Addl Ch Sec, H.P. Govt, 84-85, Ch Sec, H.P. Govt, 85-87; Chmn, H.P. Service Commission, 87-91; life mem, IIPA; mem, India Intl Centre; publs; Project Formulation in Developing Countries (78); Project Appraisal – A Third World Viewpoint (86); Microcomputers in Govt (92).

Darbari, Anand: Chmn & Mg Dir, CCI since Nov 88B 20 Sep 46 at Kanpur; s of R.S & Vidya Darbari; m, Manjari; one s and one d: Ed: BA; Dip in Business & Mktg Mgmnt; started as Executive in provate sector and after 9 years moved to public sector in 74; held posts of Regional Mgr, Gen Mgr, Mg Dir, Bharat Wagons & Engg Co Ltd; joined CCI as Dir (Mktg) in Aug 87; Pres, Public enterprises Centre for Human Resources Dev, Delhi; mem; governing body, Ind Inst of Mgmnt, BIS, All India Mgmnt Assn, Central Pollution Control Board.

Zutshi, Hira Lal : Chmn & Mg Dir. Hindustan Petroleum Corpn, since June 95; b 42; Ed: BE; started career as Sales Supvsr, HPCL, 63; has held various posts in HPCL, such as Mgr, Sr Mgr (aviation). Ch Regional Mgr, Pune, Madras, Dep Gen Mgr. HRD ; Underwent extensive training programmes, both in country and abroad.

Azad Jagan Nath : Prof of Urdu, Jammu Univ, b 5 Dec 1918, in ISAKHALL (MIANWALL Dist, Pakistan); son of Trilok Chand Mahrum & Asha; m, Vimla; two s, three d; Ed: M.A.; Asst Editor, Publs Divn, GOI, 48-55, inl Officier, PIB, 55-56, PRO, Min of Home, GOI, 66-68, Dep Principal inf Officer, GOI, 68-74; publs; poetry Bekaran, Sitaron Se Zaron Tak; Watan Mem Ajnabi; Nawa-e-Pareshwan; Kehkashan, Long poems; Bachchon Ki Nazmen; Delhi Ki Jama Masjid; Ajanta; Abul

Kalam Azad, Rafi Sahib Ke Mazar Par; Matam-I-Saalik; prose; Tilok Chand Mahrum; Iqbal aur Auska Ahad; Junoobi Hind Mem do Hafte; Mere Guzashta Roz-o-Shab; Iqbal aur Kashmir; Iqbal; Mind and Art; Munsin Ki Raakh; recd Soviet Land Nehru Awd; Iqbal Medal, Surat-I-Pak Awd.

Kaul, J.N : Chmn, Madhya pradesh Civil Service Commission, Since 92'; Ed: MA, LLB; joined IAS, served as Asst Collector, Collector, PA to Min for Agriculture and Food, GOI, Registrar, Coop Societies, Special Sec, Forest Dept, Sec, Commerce and Industry, Adviser to Govt of Keny, Commr, Bhopal, Jt Sec, Rural Dev and Civil Aviation, Directorate Gen, Civil Aviation, Addl Sec, Defence Min, GOI; Dev Commr, MP, Sec, Home Ministry, GOI; Add; Chmn, M.P. Civil Service Commission, Bhopal.

Warikoo, R.N.

Born on Srinagar ed BA m Lalitha Devi ; was Labour Commr, Controller Tawaza, Administrator Srinagar Municipality, Director Social Welfare, Addl Secy Works & Power; Deputy Controller Weights & Measures ; Services appreciated during Indo Pak conflict 1965.

Zutshi, Janki Nath: Born on Oct 1917 Srinagar ed BA (Hons) LLb; editor "Kashmir Times" 1940; founder editor "Sentinal" English weekly Srinagar 1941-43; Secretary and Director General Information and Broadcasting J & K 1947-53; author 'Kashmir Today', 'Through Blood', sweat and Tears, 'Kashmir in Security Council'; accompanied Indian Delegation to United Nations 1947-48; represented Kashmir in Indian Industrial Exhibition Moscow 1963; editor 'Kashmir Post' 1954; Director Information and Controller Stationery & Printing 1955-59; Trade Commissioner in Delhi 1962; Development Commissioner 1963, later Secretary Information. Director Field Survey Organisation; Director Census.

Raina, R.C. IAS : B July 28, 1917 ed MA (Eng); took part "Quit Kashmir"1946; Editor 'Khidmat' (Eng) 1947; joined State service Oct 4, 1948; held high posts like Secy to the PM, also Secy Education, Information, Industries, Financial Commr; Trade Commr J & Kashmir, New Delhi.

"Ram Chander Raina" (popularly known as R.C) S/O Late Tara Chand Raina and Umbravati originally resident of Chattabal, Srinagar, Kashmir achieved "Parm Dham" on July 22, 2001.

Shri Raina joined the freedom struggle and was jailed during the “Quit Kashmir Movement”. He started his career as P.A to the then Dy.Prime Minister of J & K Bakshi Ghulam Mohd.on his request he was taken by the then Prime Minister of J & K Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah (1947 – 1948) as private Secy.. He served with Sheikh Sahib till 1953. he served as Secretary and commissioner in nearly all the Deaprtments of J & K Government. He was among the 1st batch of IAS officers from J&K.

A true secular at heart, he was at ease with young and old alike and had knowledge wide range of subjects. Being widely read personality books were his constant companion to the last. His dream of returning to his home in Kashmir remained unfulfilled but ever hopeful that this was a “Churning Point” in Kashmir.

Kachru D.N. IAS : B Sept 29, 1925: actively associated with freedom movement as student: joined State service Nov.27, 1947; was Trade Agent Pathakot, then Amritsar; now Jt.Dir Tourism, J & K.

Pandit Rameshwar Nath Kao, IP : Pt. Rameshwar Nath Kao, founder of the R & AW (Research & Analysis Wing), passed away in the early hours of January 20, 2002.

Born in 1918, Rameshwar Nath, Ramji to friends, joined the Indian Police (IP) in 1940 and was allotted the UP cadre. A postgraduate in literature, he found himself in the Police Training College, Moradabad, where he was uncomfortable with his British Officers, who had merely written Senior Cambridge exams and were too boisterous and crude for his liking. Always immaculately dressed, he had a fetish for cleanliness. He later came away on deputation to the Intelligence Bureau just before 1947 and set up base for the rest of his illustrious career.

He was deputed to jointly investigate (along with the Chinese and the British) the crash of the “Kashmir Princess,” just before the Bandung Conference of 1956.

In 1963, he took over as the founding director of the Air Research Centre (ARC). Five years later, he left the Intelligence Bureau, forming, with Indira Gandhi’s blessings, the Research and Analysis Wing, better known as RAW. With the Samyukt Vidayak Dal brand of no-holds-barred politics surfacing in 1967, the IB could not pay sufficient attention to external intelligence. He with Shri Sankaran Nair (“Shanks”) organized the outfit meticulously, burning midnight oil and going into every micro detail.

With the unrest in East Pakistan and the 1971 War came his finest hour. The R & AW and the Directorate – General Security, also under him, played stellar roles in the whole affair. With Mrs Gandhi’s return to powr in 1980, Pt.Kao came back as Special Adviser to the Cabinet, overseeing both IB and R & AW and coming closest to the position of an intelligence czar. He was the first to float the idea of a special security unit for the Prime Minister.

Pt. Kao got on famously with colleagues of other services. He never threw rank or his powerful connections at them. He helped those in distress. Suave and polite to a fault, he was never known to raise his voice.

K.N.Daruwala, The Pioneer, January 21, 2002.

Smt.Chander Kanta Gariyali, IAS

On Dec.14, 2000 she was awarded Rotary India Award 2000 for her dedicated work to population control and welfare of women and children in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. One of only two IAS officers of the Tamil Nadu. She was born in Delhi where her parents had moved to, because of the first Pakistan invasion in 1948.

Daughter of Smt.Indira and late Pt.Kashi Nath Gariyali, Chander Kanta, alias Sarla, was born in 1948 in the house of her maternal grandparents, Smt.Tara and Pt.Tara Chand Tikoo, in Srinagar. Like several other Kashmiri Pandts, her father also moved to Delhi from Kashmir in 1948 in search of livelihood and, in due course, became a prominent social figure in the biradari living in central Delhi.

Chander Kanta was bright student from the beginning. She received her school education in the Arya Samaj Girls Higher Secondary School. In 1970, she completed her post-graduation in Social Work from the Delhi School of Social Work and topped the university In 1972, she qualified for the Indian Administrative Service and after receiving training at the National Academy of Administration, Mussoorie, she opted for the Tamil Nadu cadre.

In 1974, Chander Kanta married Dr.S.Rajkumar, a leading Psychiatrist, Co-Founder of Schizophrenia Foundation and Founder President of Alzheimer Society of India and settled down in Chennai.

A.N.Kaul, Koshur Samachar, January 2001.

Diplomats

Kaul, Triloki Nath, ICS : Born 18 Feb 13, at Baramulla (J & K) ; son of T. Kaul; Married to Sati; one son, one daughter ; Ed: LLB, Allahabad, LLM, London; Sec, ICAR, 47; first Sec, Ind Embassy in Moscow, 47-49, Dep Sec-Gen, Ind delegation to UN, 47, First Sec, Ind Embassy in Washington, 49-50, Counsellor, Ind Embassy in Peking, 50-52, Min, 52-53, Jt Sec Min of External Affairs, 53-56, Chmn, Intl Control Comm & Leader of Ind delegation, Vietnam, 57-58, Ambassador to Iran, 58-60, Dep & Acting High Commr in London, 60-62; Ambassador to USSR and Mongolia, 62-66; Sec. Min of

External Affairs, 66-68, Foreign Sec, 68-72, Ambassador in Washington also accredited as High Commr to the Bahamas, 73-76; India's Rep to UNESCO, 80-85; Ambassador to USSR, 86-89; Hon Fellow, King's College, London; Pres, ICCR, 76-77; Hon Prof, Kashmir Univ, 78; Co-ordinator, Indo-British Seminar, 84; Pres, World Affairs Foundation; Ed-in-Chief, World Affairs; Publ 9 books.

Nehru Braj Kumar ICS : Born on 4 Sept 09, at Allahabad (UP); s of Brijlal & Rameshwari Nehry; m, Magdalena Friedmann; three s; Ed: BSc (Econ), London School of Econs, Galliol College, Oxford, Barristor-at-law, Inner Temple; joined ICS, 34, Under Sec, Dept of Ed, Health 7 Lads, GOI, 39, Mem, Legislative Assembly of India, 39; Officer on Spl Duty, Reserve Bank of India, Under Sec, Finance Dept, GOI, 40, 40, Jt. Sec, 49, Exec Dir, World Bank, and Min, Ind Embassy in Washington, 49-54, Soc, Dept of Econ Affairs, 57-58, Comm-Gen of Econ Affairs, 58-61, Ambassador to USA, 61-68, Governor of assam & Nagaland, 68-73, also of Meghalaya, Manipur and Tripura, 72-73, High Commr to UK, 73-77; Governor of J & K, 81-84, Governor of Gujrat , April 84-Feb 86; Chmn, Ind Advisory Board of ANZ Grindlays Bank, since 88, Hindustan Oil Exploration Co. Ltd, since 87; Pres, Dayal Singh College Governing Body; Rep of India, Reparations Conf, 45, Commonwealth Finance Min Conf, UN Gen Assembly, 49-52 and 60, FAO Conf, 49-50, Sterling Balance Conf, 47-49, Bandung Conf, 55; deputed to enquire into Australian Fedn Finance, 46; Mem; UN Adv, Committee of Administrator and Budgetary Questions, 51-53; Advisor to Sudan Govt, 55; Mem, UN Committee on Investments, 62; Chmn, 77; Fellow, London School of Econs; publs: Speaking of India; Australian Federal Finance; Thoughts on our President Discontents; received LL.D (Honoris Causa) from Missouri Valley College, D. Litt (Honoriscausa) from Jacksonville Univ, Panjab Univ.

Haksar, Parmeshwar Narain : Born on 4 Sept 13, at Gujranwala (Pak); s of Jagdish Narain & Dhanraj; m, Urmila; two d: Ed: M.Sc., Barrister-at-law. Allahabad Univ. London School of Econ, called to the Bar from Lincoln's Inn: practiced at Allahabad High Court, Officer on Special Duty, Min of External Affairs, GOI, 47, delegate. Diplomatic Conference, Geneva, 49, Sec. High Comm in London, 48, Adviser & later alternate chmn. Neutral Nations Repatriation Comm. Korea, 53-54, Dir. External Publicity Division. Min of External Affairs, 55-58, mem. UN expert ottee on public information, 58. Jt Sec. Min of External Affairs. 59-60. High Commissioner to Nigeria, 60. Ambassador to Dahomey & Togo, 62-64, to Austria, 64-65, Dep High Commissioner & later acting High Commissioner in UK , 65-67, Sec, Prime Min's Secretariat, 67-71, Principal Sec to Prime Min, 71-73, Dep Chmn, National Labour Inst, Centre for Research in Rural & Industrial Development, Chandigarh, Giri Inst of Development Studies, Lucknow; Prof, Kashmir Univ; mem, UN International Civil Service Comm, 75-80; editor-in-chief Man & Development; author, Premonitions; and L.L.D. (honoris causa), by Kashmir & Punjabi Univs.

Haksar, Aditya Narayan : Consultant to Common wealth Secretariat and U.N.D.P, since 92; b 3 Dec 33, at Gwalior (MP);s of Prakash & Subhadra Haksar; m, Priti; one s, one d; Ed: MA (Allahabad), MA (Oxford); joined IFS, 56; Third/Second Sec, Jakarta, 57-60, Dy Ch of Protocol, N. Delhi, 60-68; First Sec (Commercial), Brussels, 64-67, Addis Ababa, 67-68 (also Liaison Offcr to ECA); Counsellor (Commercial), Cairo, 68-70, UN, New York, 70-73, Kt. Sec and Spokesman, Min of External Affairs, N. Delhi, 74-77; High Commission to Kenya and Seychelles, also Permanent Rep to UNEP, 77 80; Minister, Washington, 80-83; Ambassador, Protugal, 84-87, Sec & Dean, Foreign Service Training Inst. 88-90; Ambassador to Yugoslavia, 90-91; Elected Pres, UN Environment Programme Governing Council, 80-81.

Dhar, Prithvi Nath: Chmn, Board of Governors, Inst of Econ Growth, Delhi, since 87; b 1 March 19; m, Sheila; two children; Ed; MA; Lecturer in Econ, Edward College, Peshawar, Hindu College, Delhi, Delhi School of Econs, 41-55, Reader in Business Mgmt, Delhi School of Econs, 55-59, Sr Fellow, Ind Inst of Econ Growth in charge of Industrial Econ Research Section, UN Econ Adviser to British Gulana, 62-63, Dir, Inst of econ Growth, Delhi, 63-70, Adviser to Prime Min, 70-71, Sec to Prime Min, 71-77, Prof of Econ, Inst of Econ Growth, 77-78; Asst Sec Gen, UNO, 78; mem; National Credit Council, Ind Council of Social Science Research, Governing Council of Aslan Inst for Econ Dev & Planning, ESCAP on Board of Dirs of Hindustan Steel Ltd & Central Board of State Bank of India.

D.P.Dhar : Born on 1920 ed S.P.College Srinagar, Lucknow Varsity; joined politics 1939; Secy to Emergency Officer Law and Order 1947, later Home Secy; member Indian Delegation to U.N.O; State's Home Minister 1952: Cabinet Minister till 1968: now India's Ambassador in Moscow.

Shakdhar, Shyam Lal: B 1 Nov 18, at Srinagar (Jammu & Kashmir); s of K.R. Shakdhar & Rakhmani; m, Sarga Devi; two s, one d; Ed; B.A.; worked with GOI in various Mins., 40-50, Dept of Parliamentary Affairs. Sabha. 64-73, Sec-Gen. 73-77; Ch Election Commissioner of India 77-82; was pres. Assn of Sec-Gen of Parliaments; mem; Inst of Constitutional & Parliamentary Studies. Ind Inst of Public Administration, governing board of International Centre for Parliamentary Documentation, Geneva, Ind Council of World Affairs; publs; Practice and Procedure of Parliamentary Documentation, Geneva, IND Council of World Affairs; publs; Practice and Procedure of Parliament; Process of Legislation; Inter-Parliamentary Relations; Budget in Parliament; Comptroller & Auditor-General in India & U.K. – A Comparison; Two Estimates Committees; Administrative Accountability in Parliament; The Commonwealth Parliament of India - The 25 Years of the Republic; Samvidhan Aur Sansad-Ganatantra Ke 25 Varsh.

Sports

Zutshi, Gita : Athlete; Born on 20 Dec 56, at (Bihar), d of A.N. Zutshi & Radha; single; Ed: Dip from NIS, Patiala: represented First Asian Track and Field Championship of Manilla, 73; 1st in 800M race, Indo- Sri Lanka Meet, Columbo, 74, two Gold medals, Dual Invitation Meet, Teheran, 76; Gold for 800M and Silver for 400M, in Kaide-Azam Intl Invitation Meet, Lahore, 76; Gold medallist, VIII Asian Games, Bangkok, 78; Asian Field & Track Championships, Tokyo, 79; represented Asia in Pre-Oly, Moscow, 79; World Cup, 79; four Gold medals in Pakistan Natl Games, Karachi, 80; one Gold and one Silver in Asian Track & field championships, Tokyo, 81; Silver medallist in World Cup, 81; two Silver medals in IX Asian Games Cup, 81; two Silver medals in IX Asian Games; Los Angeles Oly, 83; Awd: Shakti Puruskar of Delhi State; Sports awd of Haryana State; Arjun awd and Padma Shri, 83.

Science

Dhar, Dr.Moti Lal : B 29 Oct 14, at Srinagar (Kashmir); s of Dina Nath & Poshi; m, Mohini; two s; Ed: M Sc., PhD., London.; Ch Chemist, Drug Research Laboratory, Jammu, 40-50, Head of Med Chem Div, 50-62, Dir, Central Drug Research Inst, Lucknow, 63-67, Vice Chancellor, Banaras Hindu Univ, Varanasi, 77; Fellow: Ind National Science Acad, Ind Acad of Sciences; Pres, National Acad of Sciences, 71-72; Chmn, Board of Governors of IIT, Kanpur, 75-78, Mgmnt Cttee, Inst of Microbial Technology, C.S.I.R., mem: National Cttee on Science & Technology, 75-77, AIIMS, New Delhi, 78-84, governing body, National Inst of Immunology, 83-86; I.G. Inst of Med Sciences, 83.

Khoshoo, Dr. Triloki Nath: Sec, Dept of Environment, GOI, since May 82; b 7 April 27, at Srinagar (Kashmir); s of Samsar Chand & Vanamala; m, Chandra; two s; Ed: M.Sc (Hons), Ph.D : Lecturer, Dept of Botany, Panjab Univ, 52-56, Senior Lecturer 56-62, Reader & Head of Postgraduate Dept of Botany, Jammy & Kashmir Univ, 62-64, Asst Dir, National Botanical Research Inst, 64-73, Scientist-in-charge 73-75, Dep Dir in-charge 75-76, Dir, Natl Botanical Research Inst, 76-82, Fellow; Ind National Science Academy, Ind. Academy of Sciences, Ind Soc of Genetics & plant Breeding. Ind Academy of Horticultural Sciences; mem; U.P. State Council of Science & Technology, Central Council for Research in Unanai, GOI, Expert Group of Forestry & Environment, Dept of Science visory board, Systematics & Evolution; received Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Memorial Prize for ICAR, 76-77;

Kaul, Ravindar Nath : Dir, Forestry Research, Forest Research Institute , Dehradun, since 81;b 30 March 28, at Lucknow (u.p) s of Triloki Nath; m, Chandra Prabha; Ed:

M.sc. (Agron), Assoc. IARI (Agron) A.I.F.C.: Served in Forest Department of Madhya Pradesh 57; Asst Conservator of Forests. 54-57; Forest Officer, Soil Conservation Research, Demonstration & Trg Centre, Dehra Dun, 58, Head, Central Arid Zone Research Institute, Jodhpur, 69; Ed-in-ch Annals of Arid Zone, 70, UNESCO Project Manager, Baghdad, Iraq, 75; Joint Commissioner (Forestry), Ministry of Agriculture, 80; hon ed, Indian Forester; ; .

Kaw, Predhiman Krishan: Dir, Inst of Plasma Research, Gandhinagar, since 82; b 15 Jan 48, at Srinagar; s of Premnath & Somawati; m, Saroj; two s, one d: Ed: M.Sc., PhD., FASC, FNA; Post –Doctoral Fellow, IIT, Delhi, 66-67, Post –Doctoral Associate, Princeton Univ, 67-69, Asst Prof, Princeton Univ, 69-71, Associate Prof, 71-74; Prof, Physical Research Lab, Ahmedabad, 74-75; Pri.cipal Research Physical & Prof, Princeton Univ, 75-82; received INSA Awd, 74.

Bhat, Pushkar Nath : Dir & VC, Ind Veterinary Research Inst, Izatnagar, since 84; b 9 Oct 37, at Nunar (Kashmir); s of Maheswar Nath & Zoon Mali; m, Pran Pyari; two d; Ed: B.V. Sc. & AH, M.V. Sci.; Ph.D; adviser, Govt of Iraq, 74-75, Scientist, IVRI, 75-81., Project Coordinator, Coordinated Research Project, 81-83, Dir, Central Inst for Research on Goats, Makhdoom, 81-84.; Vice Pres, SABRAO; Sec Gen, Ind Assn of Animal Porudction; Pres, Ind Soc of Animal Genetics & Breeding, Gemetoc Assn of India, American Soc in Animal Sciences, Intl Biometrics Soc; Publ: Breeding of Dairy Cattle in Tropics; Blood Group of Biochemical Polymorphics; Goat Production in Tropics; and over 300 research papers; chaired 20 natl and Intl conferences.

Business

Sapru, Jagdish Narain : B 16 Nov 33, at Allahabad (UP) : s of Trijugi Narain; m, Gita; two s; Ed; MA (Econs); specialization in Business Mgmt; Branch Mgr (Mktg), 67, Mgr, Product Dev, 69, DM, Mktg (E) 71, Mktg Mgr, 73, appointed to Board, 74, Chmn, India Tobacco Divn, 76, Dep Chmn, Incharge of Traditional Business, 78, Dep Chmn, Hotels, Div, retaining Printing and Packaging Divn, 81 & Vuce Chmn, Hotels Divn, retaining Printing and Packaging Div, 81 & Vice Chmn, ITC, Dec 81, Chmn, 83-92; Chmn & Dir, ITC Hotels Ltd, Punjab Anand Batteries Ltd; Dir, ITC Intl Ltd, USA, Surya Tobacco Co. Pvt. Ltd., Nepal, Intl Mgmt Inst, INDIA, New Delhi; MEM Cttee, Indian Chamber of Commerce; mem ; Standng Advisory Cttee, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry; mem , Exec Cttee, Indian Natl Cttee-Intl Chambers of Commerce; mem, Board of Governors; IIM, Calcutta, Indian Foundation for PR Educ & Research; Mem; Himalayan Tourism Council; UP, State High Level Industries Advisory Council, Confederation of Engineering Industry; Life Fellow, Soc of Manpower Planners

Nehru, Brijendra: Export Exec; b 15 Oct. 34; Dir.: Tata Industries Ltd. Tata Zambia Ltd; Mg Dir., Tata Exports Ltd; mem: Adv. Council on Trade. Govt. of India, Dev Council for Leather & Leather Goods Inds. Govt of India, Cttee on Export Strategy, 80.

Haksar, Ajit Narain: Chmn. Emeritus, ITC Ltd. since 83; b 11 Jan 25, at Gwalior (MP); s of Iqbal Narain Haksar; m, Madhuri; one s, one d; Ed: BA (Allahabad), MBA; served J. Walter Thompson Co., New York, 45-46, joined ITC Ltd, 48, Mktg Dir., 66, Dep Chmn, 68, Chmn, 69-83; Chmn, Board of Governors; Ind School of Mines, Dhanbad, IIT, Kharagpur, Bhadrachalam Paperboards Ltd; Dir.: Fomento Hotels & Resorts Ltd, Surya Tobacco Co Ltd., STI Biplus Tubing (India) Ltd, Swarnima Oil Industries; mem: Advisory Board, AIR, Industrial Advisory Gp, Govt of Orissa, J & K, Planning Board, Govt of Goa; publ: Political Economic Management of India, by India, for India (68); Bite the Bullet; Sai baba.

Kaul, Rajive : Mg Dir, Natl Insulated Cable Co of India Ltd, Calcutta; b 3 Apr 49, at Secunderabad; s of P.N. Kaul & R. Kaul; m, Manjari; one s, one dl Ed: B.Sc (Hons); Chmn, Natl-Rolling & Steel Ropes Ltd; Dir: Nicco Orissa Ltd, Telelink Nicco Ltd, Hambro Nicco Financial Services Ltd, Nicco Batteries Ltd, Nicco Investments Ltd, Ind Copper Inf Centre, Associated Industrial Dev Co Ltd; Hercules Trading Corpn Pvt Ltd; Vice-Pres; Ind Elect Mfrs' Assn, Ind Chamber of Commerce; Add: Mother (77); Portrait of a Woman (translation of Akilan's novel); Our Mother (78); Bjarati (78); The Drama of the Love Divine (79); Puyal Nilaippadilal (80); Dante and Sri Aurobindo; A Study of the Divine Comedy and Savitri (81); Atom and the Serpent (82); Amuda Thuli Uthirathathu (83); Manimekalai (89) Awd: Bharati Memorial Shield from Bharati Sangam, Madras, 65, Golden Shield, 72.

Dhar, Vijay Kumar : Born May 18,1941 Srinagar ed FSc m Kiran 1965; dynamic business executive; running 'Broadways' Cinema, Restaurant as also Atwajan Poultry Farm; Dir Junion Chamber of Commerce; mem: Rotary Club; widely travelled home, abroad.

Jia Lal Khod : He was one of the few earliest entrepreneurs of the Pandit community in Srinagar who started a Rice Mill. The only part of the community which had any link with business were the Bohras. In Kashmiri they were called "Buhur" and dealt mainly in groceries.

Media

Bhan, Pushkar: Producer (Rural Broadcast), Radio Kashmir, Srinagar; Born on 22 Aug 25, at Srinagar (Kashmir);s of Tarachand & Tara Devi; m, Prabha; one d ; Ed: B.A: joined National Cultural Front as playwright & stage actor, 47, joined Ind Pople’s Theatre Assn, Bombay, 49, with Radio Kashmir, Srinagar, since 52; has about 250 plays & featues to his credit; has also acted in full-length Kashmiri film Manzirath (winner of Press Awd) & Shairi Aazim Mehjoor; received State Cultural Academy Awds for best stage plays, 68. 73. 75, Kashmir Theatre Federation awd for best playwright of the year, 75, Padma Shri, 74; Sahitya Akademi awd for Machana (collection o plays) 76-77.

- A. N. Dhar
- B. Mohan Chiragi
- C. M K Tikku
- D. Pradeep Magazine
- E. M L Kotru
- F. M K Dhar
- G. Jay Raina
- H. S N Dhar

Kaul,Sumer : Columnist, Dep Editor, Indian Express; b 14 Nov 38, Ed: MA (Econ), M.Sc (journalism); won Columbia Universityos Henry Taylor award for 67; Sub-ed, Staff Corrspt, Film Critic, Feature writer, Hindustan Times, later served with AP at UN, New York & New Delhi & Spl Corrsptd of Indian Express; Political Commentator, AIR, and Doordarshan.

Hari Kunzru : “The literary suspense story of the year is whether or not India will accept Hari Kunzru, the Anglo-Kashmiri “half – caste” author, whose first book, The Impressionist, received the biggest advance in publishing history and is coming soon to a bookshop near you.

“Kunzru (32) will anxiously be shepherding his Kiplingesque novel on its passage to India, traveling to the land of his Kashmir orthopaedic surgeon father, which forms the backdrop for his much-hyped literary debut.

“The novel, set in imperial times with nawabs, aristocratic Kashmiri Pandits, hijras and Mumbai’s red light district as characters, has already made history in the literary stakes

with its record six-figure advance and near-uniform praise. Now, say Kunzru's agents, it is India's opinion that matters.

"His proud agent, Johnny Geller, whose firm handles other ethnic authors such as Vikram Seth, told this paper, "The Indian seal of approval is very important to Hari and for his book. Of course, his British, but there is a part of him that is not from here and his book is about India".

"So, the hardsell is on for *The Impressionist*, a novel that is being heavily marketed and with strikingly different book jackets both in Britain and America, as part of the record breaking, reported advance fee of 1.25 million pounds.

"Between now and the middle of next week, said one industry pundit with the excited over statement that has now turned 21st century authors into little more than thoroughbred race horses, Kunzru's name should have appeared in spoken or written form in some part of the world several hundred times a day, to ensure his impending celebrity.

"Geller less flamboyant, but admits Kunzru, the journalist who became his literary discovery, will help with the publicity by traveling to the US and then to India.

"The itinerary is thought to indicate the huge significance, not so much of India's market, but whether or not it appropriates Kunzru as one of its own.

"No one is sure if the novel's early venue Agra, and later, Mumbai, will really like or sharply-written half-mocking story about that very Indian entity, "the baharupiya", Pran Nath Razdan.

"The life of Razdan, the Anglo-Kashmiri half caste protagonist of the novel, becomes an expose of the Indian caste system, Hindu purity laws, Kashmiri Pandit traditions and eventually the foundations of Empire.

"Kunzru, say those who have worked closely with him, is that rarity, "a literary commercial writer", who is, unlike Arundhati Roy, already working on his next novel, around the same familiar "trans-global themes", which revolve around "identity".

"Unlike the debut novel though, it will not be set in India and will not allow Kunzru the attention-grabbing headstart of offering ethnic wares to the jaded West.

Rashmee Z.Ahmed, 26.03.02 Times of India.

Music

Pt. Jagan Nath Shivpuri The greatest classical music theorist of Kashmir of the 20th century. He is a renaissance man for having brought classical music leaving into Kashmir in a big way. Founder of "Prem Sangeet Niketan", the pioneer institution which produced many teachers and performances of classical music. Hundreds of boys and girls got trained by him and his students. A very unassuming saintly person who shies away from publicity and has therefore, been ignored by the media and the government. He

revived “Soofiana Kalam” and prof new ingour into it. The “Santoor” maestro Pt. Bhajan Sopory and his sitar meestro father Pt. Shamboo Nath Sopory owe a lot to Masterji Shivpuri.

Pt. Prem Nath Chhatoo : Classical gitar player. A disciple of Bab Bhagwan Gopi Nath Ji. Antist with Radio Kashmir. Taught “Sitar” classical to dozens of devoted students. Played Ragas with the style and sweetness comparable to that of ousted Allaudin Khan from whom he had received his training. A master of old school with high values and standards, a spiritual bent of mind and a wonderful sense of humour.

Pandit Bhajan Sopori : A world known Santoor artist. He was born in a family of musicians and was trained by his grandfather Pandit S.C. sopori and father pandit S.N. Sopori. He belongs to the Sufiana Gharana of musicians.

Pandit Bhajan Sopori, a Music Composer of repute is the only Classical musician of India having composed music for more than 4000 songs in almost all the languages of the country including Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, etc. He has composed music for films, commercials, documentaries, serials, operas, chorals, Orchestras, etc. He has been the youngest composer to compose for the National Orchestra (Vadya Vrinda).

His son Abhay Rustum Sopori is flloving in his foot steps and is already a known artist.

Law

Pt. Kailas Nath Wanchoo : The Hon'ble Mr. Kailas Nath Wanchoo, B.A. (Allahabad). I.C.S., Judge, Supreme Court, since August 11, 1958.; b. February 25, 1903; He was educated at Pandit Pirthi Nath High School, Kanpur, Muir Central College, Allahabad and Wadhan College, Oxford. Passed into the Indian Civil Service, 1924; Joined service December 1, 1926 ; served as Joint Magistrate and District and Sessions Judge in various Districts in Uttar Pradesh; Judge, Allahabad High Court, Feb. 1947-Jan. 1951; Chief Justice, Rajasthan High Court, 1951-58; Chairman, U.P. Judicial Reforms Committee, 1950-51; reported to the Government of India on the financial and other implications of the new State of Andhra, February 1953. Sole Member, Indore Firing Inquiry Commission, 1954; Chairman, Dholpur Succession Case Commission, 1955; Member, Law Commission, India 1955. Appointed as Chief Justice of India on 12.04.1967. Retired on 24.02.1968.

(The Supreme Court of India’s website)

Pt. Jia Lal Kilam : Judge of the High Court of J & K. A social activist and great humorist and creative writer. Fought against Shiv Narayan Fotedar in many K.P elections. Author Of History of Kashmiri Pandits.

The name indicates Pt.Jia Lal's ancestors were the residents of village Kilam. This village is started near Qazigund in Tehsil Kulgam of southern Kashmir. after graduating himself in law Pt.Jia Lal practiced as an advocate in the Courts of Srinagar. Being an intelligent law graduate Mr.Jia Lal was appointed as a Judge of High Court in Jammu and Kashmir state. this earned for him the title of Justice and there after he was known as Justice Kilam.

Prior to his joining the High Court as a Judge he had quite a flourishing practice as a senior member of the bar. While he was practicing as a lawyer he also joined the Yuvak Sabha as a leader of K.P.Community in one of his famous speech as Shital Nath he once said that if Sheikh Abdulla's Muslim conference knew how to kill we the K.Ps knew how to die. Another episode of those community was related this: one Mr. Lather was the Inspector General of Police in Jammu Kashmir state. K.Ps had started against the report submitted by commissioner handed by one Mr.Glancy depriving our community of employment opportunities against Government jobs. This agitation was code named as "Bread Movement".

Mr.Lawther the I.G.P had ordered that the Litho press on which posters were being printed daily should be confiscated. Somehow Mr.Jia Lal Kilam got wind of it. He wore a long robe called Pheran and lifted the small Litho machine inside his Pheran and left the premises. It was winter and people in general were wearing pherans and carrying kangris inside it. So no one suspected anything unusual about Mr. Kilam. While he was walking out on road, he was confronted by a posse of policemen headed by one Mr.Darbari who was the Inspector or A.S.P entrusted with the job of confiscating the press. Being members of the same Biradari, Mr.Kilam and Mr.Darbari knew each other well. So after exuding good wishes, Mr.Darbari requested Mr.Kilam to inform him about the location of the Litho Press as failure on his part to confiscate it could lead to the loss of his job. Mr.Kilam in his usual jocular manner replied saying that only a magical wand could lead him to the location of the press and if he wanted to have that wand he would have to lift the front of his peran.

Simultaneously, Mr.Kilam gave a haughty laugh, which confused Mr.Darbari who thought that Mr.Kilam was alluding to the male organ hidden inside the Pheran as the magical wand. Thus the two parted, one going to same place to hide the press and the other going to the office of Yuvak Sabha for search and seizure of the press which never materialized because of the wit of Mr.Kilam. I am also reminded about a third episode connected with Justice Kilam. As a judge of the High Court a case was presented to him in revision where a person had committed the crime of forging other persons impression and received the amount of a money illegally.

His lawyer had taken refuge under an article of criminal law where it is stated that no person can be compelled to be a witness against his own self. The lawyer pleaded that the prosecution had erred in obtaining the thumb impression of the accused to compare it with the thumb impression on the document in taken of receipt of money, which had

tallied thus matching the witness against his own self. Justice Kilam was perplexed as a judgment in favour of a proven criminal would open the floodgates of such crimes. He adjourned the case for a few says. When the next date of hearing the arguments came, in his interim order, he said that the element of compulsion as laid down in the article had to be proved before a final judgment was passed. The case was sent back to the lower court where the prosecution produced the policemen concerned who had obtained the thumb impression. They stated that the accused was not compelled to give his thumb impression but had given it out of his sweet will.

Shri Ved Lal Dhar “VAKIL”: A great theatre personality. Brother of famous lawyer Pandit Gana Lal Vakil. Ved Vakil was the first K.P. to marry a widow. He was a musician of classical and Kashmiri style, contributed a lot to Kashmiri music on Radio Kashmir. His sense of humour and fund of real life jokes was fantastic. I wish these had been tape recorded. His children did well too. Prof. V.P. Dhar was a classical musician and Professor of Electronics. Daughter Rajeshwari Dhar Mattoo was a classical singer and Principal of College of Education. Another daughter was married to famous artist Bansi Parimoo who died in the prime of his youth. Bansi Parimoo was the first K.P. to announce that “Kaypees are an endangered species of the planet”.

Shri Shamboo Natt Dhar: Advocate of the J & K High Court. Active in J & K politics. Founder of G.M. College earlier Hindu College, Srinagar. Later for many years its secretary. Municipal Commissioner under Maharaja Hari Singh. Late became President Srinagar Municipality under Bahshi’s Prime Ministership. Belonged to the renowned Dhar family whose ancestors fought the “Zalim” pathan rule with the help sought from Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Pt. Bala Kak Dhar Wazi-I-Wazarat in the Maharaja’s Govt. and Shri D.P. Dhar, Minister J & K and Government of India belonged to the same family.

Hak, N. K.: B June 30, 1911 Srinagar ed MA (Economics, Sociology) LLB m Somawati 1930; won gold medals for All Round Best Graduate and standing 1st in Economics in BA and Economics Research, medal for Best Section Commander, several other prizes for recitation, declamation, social service etc; joined Govt service as Munsiff, worked interalia as Special Magistrate Prem Nath Bazaz Shooting Case, Anti corruption Jammu, Traffic and Municipality Cases Kashmir, and subsequently Kashmir Conspiracy Case; the Registrar High Court, retiring as District and Sessions Judge; re-employed as Secy Jammu Firing Commission of Inquiry; Chairman Advisory Board (Preventive Detention Act); Durganag case judgements and 1041-page committal order in Kashmir conspiracy case among notable achievements.

Tickoo, Mohan Kishen: Born on Dec 3, 1911 Srinagar ed BA(Hons) LLB m Shoba; stood first law exam Delhi Varsity, joined bar 1934, judicial service 1947, held various positions notably including as special sessions judge Kashmir Conspiracy case with Shaikh Abdullah as principal accused; retired as District and Sessions Judge and Vigilance Commissioner (judicial)1968; J & K Anti-Corruption Commission

Taploo, Tika Lal : Shaheed Tika Lal Taploo, then the Vice – President of the Jammu and Kashmir unit of the BJP, fell to the bullets of the assassins on September 14, 1989.

Speakers at the meeting observed that his commitment of national security and territorial integrity of India for which he sacrificed his life will inspire the coming generations for a long time to come. Shri Taploo, a lawyer by profession, lived a principled life and never compromised on his commitments. He was a social activist and helpful everybody in the hour of need and crisis irrespective of colour, creed, caste or religion. He had a large following among the masses and was liked by the people from every section of society.

The warm, gifted, humane and selfless young Kashmiri Pandit was felled by the assassin's bullets in broad daylight outside his own home in Srinagar. The people of all faiths were stunned in disbelief and anger on his premature death. The Islamic fundamentalists murdered not only this noble person but the age-old faith and culture of universal brotherhood and love and tolerance which he symbolised in his life, they said.

Koshur Samachar, October 1997.

Film & T.V

Kak, Siddharth: The creator of Amul's popular program Surabhi. Grandson of Rama Chandra Kak, the last Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir State before its accession to India.

Siddharth Kak is filmmaker, art and film critic, journalist and editor of Cinema Vision India. As one whose range stretches from environment to history, and from Baba Amte to Raj Kapoor, Kak is today a household name as the beaming anchorperson of Surabhi, for which he bagged a series of awards including the first Screen-Panasonic Award (best TV production) recently. Kak's Surabhi has proved that non-soap can also receive a record-breaking 4.5-lakh letters for one contest and has a regular response of lakh letters.

Who or what has been the greatest influence in your life?

“My grandfather, Pandit Ram Chandra Kak, an enormously learned man and the last Prime Minister of Kashmir.”

“Ten years old and still going strong, is how one would describe Surabhi, the Doordarshan serial which has the nation hooked weekly to that sojourn across the unexplored parts of the globe, unraveling the offbeat and otherwise fascinating aspects of life.

“And now, the Surabhi Foundation is planning “a national cultural archive, a Surabhi Cultural Resources Centre in Maharashtra and a website for global connectivity,” says Siddharth kak, who besides anchoring the show, has been a host of other things, including columnist (he writes a food column), theatre person, corporate identity and cinema buff. He was in the city to inaugurate a folk art show organized by the NGO Madhyaam.

“Born in Kashmir and brought up in Delhi, Kak is now settled in Mumbai, with a self-confessed feeling of being ‘dispossessed mentally’ from Kashmir.

“A university topper from St.Stephen’s Kak found nevertheless that the real world was different and he could land no job ‘worth his calibre’. He finally got his first job in 1969 as a journalist with the Indian Express at Delhi, moving on to Mumbai when he worked for the Tata Administrative Services.

“While working as a management person with the Tatas for nine long years was not exactly fulfilling, (“It wasn’t me”), he treasures his stint at Marg, the in-house publication of Tata Sons as a very educative experience.

“Mulk Raj Anand was the editor then and he had the foresight to popularize the publication by hosting theme festivals. We had also done a Hoyasala festival and had taken the help of National Film Archives and Chitrakal Parishath. We had even used multimedia and that too two decades ago,” he adds.

Swati Sucharita, 11.05.2000, The Times of India.

Kaul, Mani Rabindranath: Born on 25, Dec, 42, at Jodhpur (Rajasthan); s of Iqbal Nath & Rani; m, Lalitha; one s, one d; Ed: BA, Jaipur, Dip in Screenplay Writing & Advance Direction, 66, Film Inst of India; has directed Uski Roti (received Filmfare Critics’ Awd, Silver medal at Milan), produced/directed Ashad Ka Ek Din (received) Filfare Critic’ Awd), (Bronze Hugo at Chicago Film Festival), (75), The Nomad Puppeteer (received Filmfare Best Documentary Awd), Chitrakathi (second major Awd at Asian Film Festival, Sydney, 78), Arrival (National Awd for best experimental films 80 & Silver Peacock of Intl Film Festival 81); served on Berlin Intl Film Festival Jury, 71; Mem, Ind Motion Picutre Producers’ Assn; held first exhibition of paintings, Bombay, 75; founded Yukti Film Co-op & made Ghashiram Kotwal (Marathi); received Jawaharlal Nehru Fellowship to write on Crisis of Form in Cinema, 74.

Raaj Kumar: Born on 8 Oct 33, at Loralai (Pakistan); son of Jadishwar Nath; Ed: BA (Hons); entered films, 52, first picture was Rangeeli; pictures include Mother India, Palgam, Dil Apna Aur Preet Parai, Gharana, Shararat, Zindagi, Dil Ek Mandir, Onche Log, Kaajal, Nool Kamal, Waqt, Hamraz, Maryada, Mere Hazoor, Lal Pathaar, Pakeezah, Dil Ka Raja, Ujala, Hindustan Ki Kasam, Heer Ranjah, Dharam Kanta, Sharara, Saudagar etc.

Army

Tickoo, Ravi: Former Indian Navy Officer and an International shipping magnate. He started his career in the Indian Navy, but resigned to concentrate on organizing a shipping company. Initially, he worked for other shipping companies in London just when the post – 1973 oil boom hit the market.

He observed that the world would need larger super tankers for shipping oil from Middle East to Europe and Far East and set up his own company Globtik Ltd., which started plying the oil routes. His company owns the world's two biggest super tankers namely Globtik London and Globtik Tokyo.

Lt.Col.P.N.Kak: He qualified himself as a Veterinary Doctor during Maharaja Hari Singh's rule and was inducted into the State Army as a Commissioned Officer. Apart from looking after horses of the cavalry regiments, he also looked after the Maharaja's personal stable of horses, which were generally used for playing polo.

He steadily rose in rank and by 1947 when Pakistan invaded Kashmir he was a Major. After the entire 161 Brigade of the Indian Army commanded by Brig.L.P,Sen landed in Srinagar and the front got stabilized, they needed local knowledge and experience to help them to coordinate with the local people and administration, they could not have found better person than the then Major P.N.Kak.

In those days, since everything including law and order had broken down, Major Kak was given the task of organizing the station and was perhaps its first Station Commander after the arrival of Indian Army in the Kashmir Valley. The cantonment area over which Major Kak presided was and even now is known as Badami Bagh. Once the army stabilized its operation, the infrastructure had to expand which needed educated, willing young people.

By 1947, the number of English educated youngmen in the community had reached an all time high. They had very few avenues of employment and the coming of the Indian Army was a boon. In this, Major Kak performed selflessly an invaluable service to the community when over a period of two to three years more than a thousand boys were employed at Badami Bagh, who were eventually confirmed as permanent employees of Defence Ministry.

Meanwhile, after the cease-fire on January 1st 1949, the entire State Army was merged with the Indian Army and Major Kak was absorbed in the Remount and Veterinary Corps (RVC) and eventually retired from service as a Lt.Col.

It is very difficult to find a selfless person such as Col. Kak and one can confidentially assert that Col.Kak has been a true Karma Yogi in the hallowed tradition set forth by Pandit Birbal Dhar who was perhaps the greatest star of the community who delivered the Kashmir Valley from the cruel yoke of Afghans with the help of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Col.Kak made a similar contribution that

NOTE: Pandits in the armed forces---please see chapter entitled 'Martial Pandit'

Appendix VI

Chronology

- 631- 633 A.D** : Heun Tsiang visited Kashmir and has left an *interesting records of Kashmir in the form of a first person account.*
- 1807** : An attempt was made to prepare snow map of Kashmir .
- 1820-23** : Trebeck and Moorcraft Survey outline prepared.
- 1823** : Maharaja Ranjit Singh becomes Master of Pubjab, capture Peshawar in 1830.
- 1825** : Montgomerie joined the Great Trignometrical survey and set out a chain of triangles across the Pir Panjal into the Kashmir Valley while Shelverton helped in controlling the water level in the city of Srinagar.
- 1832 April** : British Treaty with Amirs of Sindh, Not to attack each other.
- 1841** : Kashmir Valley was partially submerged with floods .
1842 August : Treaty between Raja Gulab Singh and China and Tibet on behalf of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.
- 1843** : The British break their word and annex Sindh.
- 1846 MARCH 16,** : Treaty Of Amritsar.
- 1846** : Alexander Cunningham prepared boundary maps soon after the treaty of Amritsar.
- 1846-1850** : Henry Strachey prepared the first rough map of Ladakh with the help of fieldwork done by Mountain

- 1849, March 29 : surveyor William Johnson.
: Sikh army completely routed at Chilianwala. And end of Sikh rule.
- 1850 : Richard Strachey explained and provided the presence of a lower snowline on the Northern than on the Southern Himalaya.
- 1857 : The Trigonometrical Survey of Jammu & Kashmir began to demarcate on map the regional details of the frontiers of the State.
- 1858 : Queen Victoria's proclamation provided some respite to Maharaja's rule and the Anglo – Indian journal Delhi Gazette declare, “we don't advocate annexation (of Kashmir).”
- 1862 : A quarter inch map of the state and its adjacent countries was completed. This would help both ordinary travelers and also explorer.
- 1862 : Field studies on Glaciation began.
- 1863 : Egerton, D.C, Kangra (Punjab) presence state report to viceroy.
- 1864 : Maharaja Ranbir Singh forced to enter into trade agreement with the British and abolish all levies and duties on British goods by the State.
- 1866 : Surveyer General started a systematic survey of the frontier area.
- 1866 : A postal service via Banihall and Murree started.
- 1866, Dec : The Calcutta Review , an Anglo-Indian journal reproduced an article from Russian journal suggesting possibilities for Anglo –Russian trade.
- 1867, April : British Joint Commissioner formally appointed in Ladakh “ to secure information for all occurrences in Tibet ,Turkistan.”
- 1867 : Church Missionary Society ,London sent its first contingent to Srinagar.
- 1870 : Kohala Bridge built over the Jhelum River connecting Murree in British India with the Kashmir Valley. On the other side via the Banihall Cart Road The route lay through Jammu
- 1870 : Maharaja forced to conclude treaty with the British which provided for the survey for all routes used for trade with Central Asia.
- 1873 : Sir Thomas Douglas – Forsyth accompanied by Captain Biddulph and Cptain Torter go to Yarkand. The treaty wiped out all the influence in the Central Asian Region .

- 1873** : Robert Shaw the British representative at Kashgar ecstatic about possibilities of trade with Central Asia.
- 1876, Nov 17-18** : Viceroy Lord Lytton proposed to Maharaja Ranbir Singh of Kashmir when they met at Madhopur that Chitral and Yasin should come under the control of the British in order to safeguard his state against Russian onslaughts.
- 1877** : Excessive rain damaged crops, revision of State Land Revenue Policy.
- 1877, July** : Gilgit Agency set up. Captain Biddulph takes over as Political Officer.
- 1879** : Godwin Auston and Lydekkar proved the existence of the Himalayan Ice Age.
- 1879** : Gilgit Agency withdrawn as the British Government got foothold in Jalalabad.
- 1882** : A Telegraph line connecting Murree, summer headquarters of the British Western Military Command with Srinagar extended to Gilgit.
- 1889** : East India Association, London, Speaker Sir Edward E. Meakin, pleaded for opening up the ICS by permitting examination to be held in India.
- 1893-1903** : Devastating floods hit the Valley. surveyed north and east of Kishtwar in the Middle Himalayas. Beverley took over the triangulation of Zoji La towards Dras. Brownlow took intersections from the stations to the north of the Wular Lake and found K2 to be 8534.4 m above sea level.
- 1894** : Running of the Post Offices within the state taken over by the British Government.
- 1896** : Telegraph Offices in Jammu and Kashmir taken over by the British Government.
- 1928-31** : Devastating floods hits Srinagar but further damage was prevented because of earlier strengthening river banks and setting up of lock –gates at Munshi Bagh and Gao Kadal helped in controlling the water level in the city of Srinagar.

C.M.S.Missionaries In Kashmir Chronology And List

- 1865-72** : **William Jackson Elmslie, M.D. Edin (C.M.S.)**
Founder and first principal of C.M.S school at Fateh Kadal
- 1874-75** : (Dr. Theodore Maxwell, B.A., B.Sc., M.D., Lond.)
- 1877-82** : (Dr. Edmund Downes, L.R. C.P.)
- 1883-** : Rev. James Hinton Knowles and Mrs. Knowles
- 1886-** : Dr. Ernest Fred, Neve, M.D., Edin
- 1888-** : Miss Elizabeth Gordon Hull.
- 1888-89** : Miss Jane Butler (C.E.Z.M.S.)
- 1888-91** : (Miss Rainsford)
- 1888-93** : (Miss Elizabeth M. Newman)
- 1890-** : Rev. Cecil Earle Tyndale Biscoe, M.A. Cantab
- 1891 –** : Rev. C.E. Tyndale-Biscoe (m.Nov., 1891)
- 1891-92** : (Miss Huntley, M.D.)
- 1891-92** : (Miss M.K. Webster.
- 1892** : Mr. Robert Venables Greene.
- 1893** : Miss Catharine Newnham (transferred to C.M.S., 1900)
- 1894-97** : Irene Eleanore Verita Petrie (C.M.S.)
- 1895-96** : (Miss May Pryce-Browne.)
- 1896-98** : (*Miss Kathleen Howatson.)
- 1897-99** : (* Miss Rudra [Mrs.Singh])
- 1897** : *Miss Foy
- 1897** : Miss Bessie Martyn
- 1898** : Miss Mary Nora Neve (in local connexion, 1894-96).
- 1899** : Rev. Cecil Edward Barton, B.A., and Mrs. Barton
- 1899** : *Miss Stubbs.
- 1900** : Miss Minnie Gomery, M.D.,
- 1864, etc** : Rev. C. Clark, M.A., & Mrs. Clark (C.M.S., Amritsar).
- 1865** : Rev. W.Smith, (C.M.S., Benares).
- 1865** : Rev. A. Brinckman (S.P.G.).
- 1870** : Rev. W.G. Cowie (afterwards Bishop of Auckland)
- 1871** : Rev. T.V. French (afterwards Bishop of Lahore).
- 1875- 83** : Rev. T.R.Wade (C.M.S., Amritsar)
- 1890** : **Cecil Tyndale Biscoe arrives in Srinagar and joins C.M.S. School (Mission School, Fateh Kadal)**
- 1892** : Rev. H.E. Perkins (C.M.S., Bahrwal).
- 1896 -** : Mr.G.W. Tyndale- Biscoe
- 1899 -** : Mr.A.B.Tyndale, M.A. Oxon
- 1899 -** : Rev. C.I.E. Burges, M.A. Cantab.
- 1947, Sept** : **Cecil Tyndale Biscoe leaves Kashmir after 57 years of devoted service to education in Kashmir .**
- 1949, Aug 1** : **Died in Rhodesia where he had settled down after retirement.**

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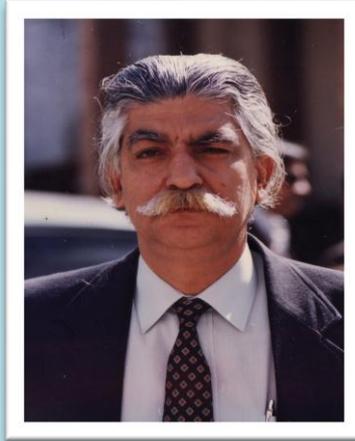
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About the Author



The author, Somnath Sapru is a senior journalist who has been associated with the leading newspapers - The Indian Express, The Pioneer and The Deccan Herald. He is the winner of prestigious awards including the Best Investigative Reporter Award 1977; Awarded the Jefferson Fellowship in Communication Studies by the East-West Communication Institute, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA in 1979; Press Foundation of Asia-Mitsubishi Award for the Asian Journalist of the “Asian Journalist of the Year Award, 1987.

He is the author of many publications: Transnational News Agencies & National Media Policies (1979), The News Merchants (1986); The Pioneer Saga (1989); Pax Japanica (1990); Witness to the Century (1999 Ed.); India 2001 Encyclopedia (2001 Contributing Editor); Lost Shangri La : Glimpses of Ancient Kashmir (2001), Cashmere: Kashir that was (2006); Skyhawks India’s debut in Military Aviation (2007); Armed Pegasus: How military aviation came to India (2012).