

Vitasta Annual Number

"Kashmir in 2000 A.D."

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MESSAGE FROM :

GOVERNOR
JAMMU & KASHMIR

I am happy to learn that the theme of the Annual Number of the 'Vitasta' will be "Kashmir in 2000 AD". While planning usually covers a five year span of time, it is good to look much farther ahead to identify the challenges and opportunities on the horizon and to have a long term vision of what lies ahead.

I wish the publication all success.

Raj Bhavan,
Jammu,
December 13, 1980

(L. K. Jha)
GOVERNOR J & K

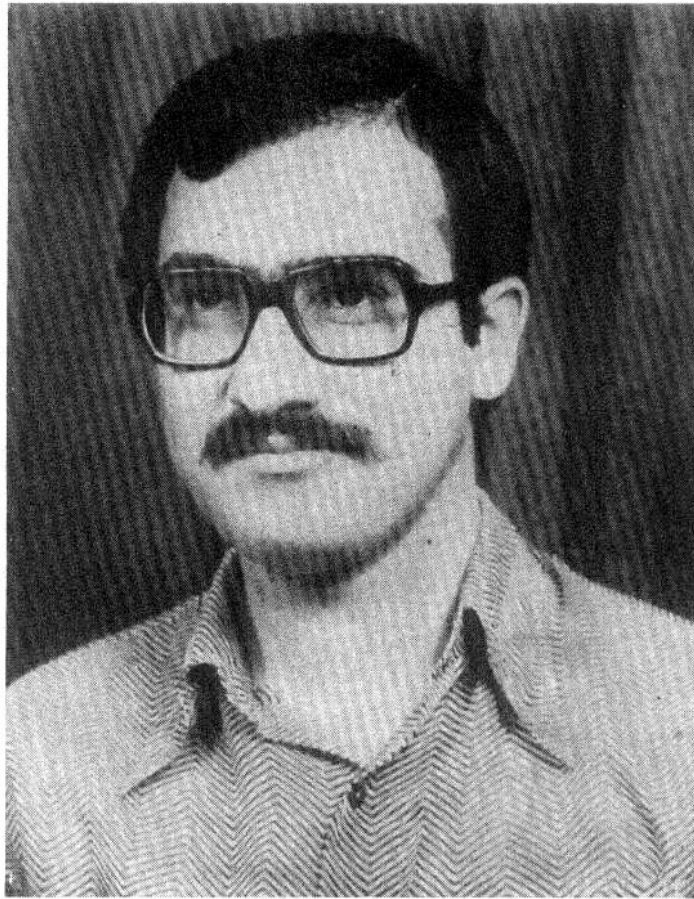
Bupesh Ogra—Babul darling

Bupesh Ogra, known in our Biradari circles as "Babul", was snatched from ourselves by the cruel hands of destiny on the night of 26th May 1981. He had returned from Lucknow by Himgiri Express and hired a taxi at Howrah Station at 12-15 A. M. for his residence in Venus Apartment at Mayfair Road, Calcutta. He, however, did not reach home ; having been driven to a destination of no return. Next day police officials gave the stunning information to parents of Bupesh that he was fatally stabbed by the taxi driver or his associates and that his body was found on the previous night in front of Alipore jail ; having been declared dead by the medical experts. This brought to tragic end the glorious life of a youth, having all achievements to his credit. For all and particularly to his parents it was a catastrophe of unimaginable magnitude.

Born in 1954, on 18th June, at Baranagar in Calcutta, Bupesh was brought up with great care and caution, hope and expectation by his parents, Mohankishan ji Ogra & Prabha ji Ogra. He graduated in Electronics Engineering from Jadavpur University in 1976 with flying colours. All through he was a meritorious student seldom having been below third in rank in his class. He was recipient of awards and

merit scholarships. After graduation he joined Blue Star, the Indian subsidiary of Perkin Elmer group as Sales Engineer. Recently, Bupesh had accepted a senior and challenging assignment in Philips (Peico Electronics Division) with which he was associated till his tragic end. He was projected for a coveted position of responsibility & distinction. Ah ! the cruel hands of inhuman criminals nipped in bud the blooming youth and brilliant career of this promising son of ours. Only son of his parents Mohankishan & Prabhaji and brother of Kalpana, this catastrophe has practically broken their backbone and shocked and stunned all their relations, friends and acquaintances ; a tragedy that so to speak brought tears to stones as well. No words can describe the grave and irreparable loss that has occurred with the passing away of this gem of a youth. His cheerful and smiling face, ever obeying disposition and contributions as an engineer will always be remembered. Sabha has lost in him a dependable stalwart who was particularly prominent in making Hawan preparations.

The Vitasta conveys heartfelt sympathies and condolences to the bereaved family and prays for their strength of mind to bear this unimaginable loss.



18th June 1954—26th May 1981

VITASTA

Editor :—

DR. B. K. MOZA

KASHMIR IN 2000 A. D.

ANNUAL NUMBER 1981

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Editor, Vitasta : Dr. Brij Krishan Moza

President's Page

It gives me great pleasure that the Kashmiri Sabha is bringing out another annual of the Vitasta. We are grateful to the contributors of articles as also to the advertisers for making it possible for us to bring out yet another issue of the publication. Our Sabha is most fortunate in having Dr. B. K. Moza who takes great interest in editing these annuals which means giving so much of his valuable time and energy.

Recently we had the Second All India Conferance of the Kashmiri Samaj hosted by our Sabha which was a great success due to the very keen interest of the members of the Sabha. We were very fortunate to have Mr. Justice P. N. Bakshi who is the President of the All India Kashmiri Samaj to preside over the conference and Sri M. L. Zutshi to inaugurate it. I am confident the Sabha will not only keep up the standard but improve upon it.

Lt. COL. P. N. KAK. (Retd.)

PREFACE

VITASTA ANNUAL NUMBER, 1980

Delay has occurred in bringing out this Annual Number of the Vitasta. Without going into details and offering a long list of reasons for the same, appropriately, heartfelt apology is being extended, at the very outset, for this unjustified delay. There is, however, satisfaction that though late, this cherished Annual Number has finally seen the light of the day despite many odds.

After a careful consideration the theme for this Annual Number was proposed as 'KASHMIR IN 2000 A. D.' The objective was to forecast the scenerio of the developments that may be visualised to take place in Kashmir and with Kashmiris, both within and outside Kashmir by the turn of this century. The initial response to this theme, howsoever important, was not encouraging as most of the authors felt it was dabbling in futurology and in the area of figures. Some felt the time specified for the receipt of articles, as required earlier, was short for compilation of data necessary for writing articles on this theme. It is a fact, this theme requires lot of statistics and data to forecast the shape of events that are going to take place by the end of this century. However, some persuasion in explaining the purpose behind this theme and, infact, proposing the topics to learned authors proved meaningful. As a result, the subsequent response was really unimaginable and a large number of articles was received of which only some have been included in this Annual Number. The remaining ones have been preserved for publication in the monthly issues of the Vitasta or for its another Annual Number. Our sincere apologies are to the authors whose articles could not be included, very regretfully, in this Annual Number of the Vitasta.

Contrary to the general belief, based on apparent developments in Kashmir & with Kashmiris, in general, the shape of things to happen by the end of the present century has not been opined as rosy. The data and the views received & duly included in this Annual Number do not, in nutshell, amount to any optimistic estimate. The increasing population, increase in unemployment, lesser interest in vocational training and over amphosis on academic qualifications, evergrowing easy attitude to matters of critical significance, loopholes in land reforms, social evils, class consciousness and ever increasing bureaucracy are the causative factors for fore^seeing rather a not bright picture of events to shape by the end of this century. Nor is present social practice suggesting any optimistic viewpoint ; the monster of ever increasing dowry practices, pomp & show in celebrating marriages and assuming unproportionate living patterns are some of the matters of grave concern which are as such superficially camouflaging the inner realities of the community.

There can be no two opinion about the leadership that Kashmir can offer in nourishing Kashmiri culture ; a lot is expected from Srinagar in providing leadership for socio-cultural aspects of the community and for developing a simpler script for Kashmiri language. Next to Kashmir, one can foresee, Pamposh Enclave to provide leadership to Kashmiris in the matters related to their community existence & upliftment. It has the necessary ingredients for playing a vital role in safeguarding Kashmiri culture and offering a thought provoking leadership for socio-cultural, educational, and professional developments of Kashmiris. It can offer the services of a data bank either for educational and professional advancement or for matrimonial information which is posing great difficulties particularly to those who have had to settle outside Kashmir for one or the other reason. This does not, however, belittle the contributions expected from other centres where Kashmiris have established their community base. These centres will, however, look forward for

guidance and coordination on a national basis either to Srinagar or to Pamposh Enclave. The latter in view of its bigger concentration of Kashmiris and nearness to Kashmir assumes this expectation of Biradari members.

This Annual Number was initially attempted to be brought out on the occasion of Kashmiri Sammelan held in Calcutta during the last week of December, 1980. Paucity of time did not allow bringing out this Number at that time. However the Proceedings of this Sammelan, as detailed by the Sammelan Committee reportier have been included as a supplement of this Annual Number. It will suffice to conclude that Sammelan movement is an epoch making development in our community affairs. All movements, discoveries and innovations which have created place for themselves in the history of mankind, were unassuming at their embryonic stages and not well conceived by all in the beginning. But, their significance, purpose and phenomenal usefulness made their impact felt. Similarly, Sammelan movement is one which can be considered as a creditable landmark in the history of Kashmiri Community as propounded by its founder, Justice P. N. Bakhshi, It has, a serious appeal for integration of Kashmiris and for eradicating some of our social evils of consequence, besides an urge for developing a simpler and suitable script of our language so necessary for our socio-cultural integration & growth and also provision for offerin : data bank for our matrimonial and professional information, This movement has a great purpose which with more emphasis on mass involvement will certainly bring about the results which comprise its objectives.

Last but not the least gratitude is expressed to the distinguished authors whose valuable contributions have made possible to bring out this publication. Gratefulness is due to our prestigious advertisers for their significant financial help. Thanks are due to Shri J. N. Zutshi, editor Nawa-i-Subh and to Prof T. N. Moza of Jammu University for their valuable help in procuring articles from other authors for this publication. Thanks are due to Lt. Col, P. N. Kak for his valuable encouragement, to Mr. M. K. Ogra for his advice and assistance, to Shri M. L. Zutshi for his help and to Kashmir Sabha Calcutta for enabling publication of this Annual Number. Indulgence is sought for any ommision or commission. We hope our future publications will be an improvement.

Jai Vitasta

BRIJ K. MOZA
Editor

A Socio-Cultural View of Kashmir now & in 2000 A. D.

By

P. N. Chaku, Jammu

We have come a long way from the times described by Lawrence in the memorable "Happy Valley." We were then largely a people living in the wide spaces of the valley entirely dependant on the vagaries of nature leading almost a primitive though contented life. As the crises got settled in the 19th century and Governmental authority began to assert itself the majority of people were drawers of water and hewers of wood. Early twentieth century saw some notable changes in the social scene. Modern type schools and even colleges made their appearance. All the same, the society bore marked features of a feudal order in which the top stratum, in numbers an insignificant minority, consisted of the army brass and big landlords and the bulk of population lived on and tilled the land. In between there was a middle class, the upper part of which consisted mainly of the top bureaucrats and the lower one held within its fold the large mass of Government employees, petty businessmen and a small number of absentee land lords who generally combined a vocation like Government service with the functional interest of a rentier class. The size of the latter — the lower middle class—was considerable and its numbers were quite a contrast with those of the bureaucrats much as the tillers of the land far outnumbered the landed gentry. There were a few, not more than three or four factories owned and run by the Government. It was an acquiescent and stagnant society, social stratification was rigid, there being very less mobility between the various social layers.

In the three decades or more after 1947 Kashmir has made phenomenal progress in various fields of its economy. Much has been written on this but mention may be made here of our achievements in respect of Agriculture, Transport & Communications, Education & Health. The innermost parts of the valley

can now be reached by a network of asphalted roads. Some tourist spots have been changed beyond recognition. More than this education at all levels of the educational pyramid has been extended progressively. Professional and technical colleges have been producing graduates over the years. Medical facilities have been extended far and wide & so has power generation been stepped up, Manufacturing Industry has not been ignored though only a small fraction of our work force is engaged in industry.

Trade & Tourism have been growing and there is no doubt that the valley is economically on the upswing, A recent report says that Jammu & Kashmir ranks fourth in terms of per capita income in the country, We come only after Punjab, Haryana & Himachal Pradesh.

All this is very flattering, indeed, and a compliment to the able and enlightened stewardship which the state has been enjoying.

There is however, a flea in the ointment. It is now widely recognized that while planned development has done immense good to the country—we have almost solved our food problem and we are now considered internationally an industrially developed country. We have not solved in any appreciable degree the twin problem of poverty and unemployment. We suffer in a good measure in the state from these economic maladies and we have to contend with other social blemishes and economic inadequacies. It is a consideration of these problems including an attempt at their solution which constitute the basis of my wishes and hopes for the future of Kashmir.

In a political democracy politics and economics are

bound to be interrelated and quite often in the conceiving of plans and later in their implementation the politician has the last word. The politician allegedly prevails in the public interest but party and personal interests play a vital role. As a consequence there is much distortion in priorities and excessive waste. Thus prestige projects are demanded in preference to more pressing requirements of the community. Provinces & regions, districts and Tahsils vie with each other for a share in the distribution of resources. Regional imbalances deserve rectification for example, but not at the cost of a balanced distribution of limited resources keeping in view the economic vitality of the projects.

Schools and Colleges and Universities have sprung up all over the Country as much in the service of social and economic imperatives of the community as to meet the importunities of political bosses. Two results have been disastrous. The quality of our products leaves, to put it mildly, much to be desired. An important functionary of Cornell University (U.S.A.) informed me some years ago that Indians would be well advised to seek admission to postgraduate courses only after they have done their masters there. This was not based on a subjective assessment of this official but bore some authentic evidence. This is true, I am almost sure about some prestigious Universities in U. S. A. and on our side we in the state are perhaps behind so many of other states in the Country. Unemployment among graduates of liberal Arts or Sciences and for, quite some time now among engineers and doctors is a serious social problem. Attempts made at its solution represent nothing but tinkering with it because the genesis of the matter is not taken into consideration. So far as the question of the unemployment among non professionals is concerned solution is now well known. The system has to be radically changed. We have to look at western countries like U. K., U. S. A. & U. S. S. R. where Universities admit students only on the basis of results of national tests. Our highly reputed Commissioners have said this so have politicians of all hues. They do so even now. But there is no serious attempt at changing the system. It is fundamentally a question of political will.

The planners are mainly responsible for the other

type of unemployment that is among engineers and doctors. As one connected with this work some years ago in the state I had calculated and foreseen a hiatus between the supply of engineers and the number that the economy could absorb. We could do nothing to bring about a correspondence between the numbers on the two sides of the pole. This imbalance is to the best of my knowledge getting worse. An objective study of this matter deserves the attention of well wishers of the state. It should be a challenge for leadership. My hope is in the year 2000 A. D. situation would be radically different as it should be in the rest of the Country, Obviously the social fabric cannot stand the strain for too long now of the unemployment of this nature and size,

The system of priorities or the investment pattern of a plan enjoys pride of place in a programme of economic development. How resources are distributed among competing claims is a highly sophisticated exercise. Broadly, after providing for running projects a view is taken of the efficacy of a given investment in adding to the national output. It may be called new investment. Since there is persistent need to add to our national income, every state tries to undertake a new investment. It would be heretical to advocate a contrary course. I would strongly urge however a revised definition of new investment. There is nothing very exact about investment output ratio and if outlays on improving existing facilities and managing them better and even maintaining them could be considered new investment, its effect on output should not be beyond forging new measurement tools. I would risk being considered crude in suggesting that in some fields new funds may be put into existing facilities, not extending them, but improving them and managing them better. The resulting addition to national income may be left to computers.

I have in mind the Tourism Industry of Kashmir. We have extended those facilities to new resort areas and improved others. The administrative set up has been radically changed. We have yet a long way to go so say our international experts. We may well have to. But comparing the grandiose nature of some of our projects elsewhere in the country and the wide range of activities in this state with the facilities available to tourists in a country like Norway one is

struck by the simplicity and modest nature of the latter and enormous difference in consumer satisfaction. I am a regular visitor to tourist resorts in the valley, oftener to Kokar Nag, Achabal and not so often to Pahalgam and Gulmarg. My experience of these resorts and of a number of what are called dak - bungalows in Jammu and in Kashmir extends over a number of years. On the basis of the experience I would say new funds, call it technically by whatever name you like should be spent on better Management which means co-ordination—say between the agency supplying power and the one in charge of water, better sanitation and above all keeping what we have in good trim. (The curtain is there but some rings are missing. The water closet is out of order) The tourist is at the door with a permit having come to spend his brief holiday. Again on the basis of my experience of management of tourist in USA and Norway, it is not a question of more or less funds. The main culprit is absence of motivation for giving satisfaction to consumers. This is a function largely of competition in various forms. The presence of this element in the western tourism industry makes it a service industry and with us it is yet another bureaucratic agency. Look at the simple matter of getting a reservation. It has been simplified but still involves running after offices and officers. One is lucky in getting a room in a dak-bungalow in the event of a land slide on the road because the best room is always reserved for one does not know whom. He may never appear & the room will remain unused. The irony is "one room" was always reserved before 1947. In 2000 AD. the tourist industry may present a better face. This would be possible if we start now with consolidating the assets we have which means better upkeep and management.

Policies for economic change are designed to make the commonman's lot better. He should be in a position to consume what is considered necessary for remaining physically and mentally healthy. Similarly, shelter and clothing should be adequate, such consumption may keep him just above the poverty line. 40% of our people in the country have to be 'raised' to this level. In this state the question of percentages apart. there are sizeable pockets of poverty among marginal farmers, the petty traders and artisans and the educated unemployed.

By 2000 A. D. what can we hope to achieve in the

state in respect of economic change to ameliorate the condition of the poorer sections? No definite answer can be given. Much will depend upon the rate of growth of the economy and the nature of the projects, whether they are labour intensive and employment oriented. There is hope, however, that judging from the schemes or projects in hand now, a substantial dent will be made in the position of power-supply—a development which will remove serious deficiency in the infrastructural facilities stimulating economic activity at so many points in the economy. Rural under-employment and unemployment may also thereby and through agro-industrial projects be considerably eased. Literacy rate should hopefully cross the 50% level and medical facilities will be more widespread and of better quality.

This account of some aspects of economic development in the state which impinge upon people, would be incomplete without a mention of those non economic conditions which consolidate what is called the social milieu of a community. Liberty, equality and secularism are three social concepts which we may discuss briefly.

Liberty and order are considered by some to be incompatibles particularly if a successful effort is to be made at economic development. I do not take this view seriously. Absence of freedoms subsumed under liberty, we know from our recent experience, instead of becoming helpful to economic change can cause it much damage.

It is with 'equality' that I would like to deal a little more elaborately. No ideological controversy is involved in the concept of "equality of opportunity." In a free society every individual should have the opportunity to actualise his potentiality. This is possible if merit is the only principle governing admissions to colleges and Universities. This principle should also conform recruitment and promotion policies in Government departments. The founding fathers of the Indian Constitution made a slight departure from this principle in respect of scheduled castes and tribes and backward classes. This is done on what is called the principle of historical restitution or discrimination by Affirmation as in U. S. A. in the case of American blacks. The rationale for giving

exceptional treatment is that some sections of the community who are suffering from handicaps generated by historical circumstances should for reason of these disadvantages have some concessions to enable them to take off. Even so, the famous Bakke case, aroused much discussion on economic and other grounds in U. S. A. when an American white brought action against a fellow black who had been given preference over him even though he had fulfilled scholastic conditions for admission to a Law School while the latter had not. The argument advanced by white supporters of this discriminatory practice, as it was called was, the number of black lawyers, which is presently very small, cannot be substantially increased, which is a desirable social objective in a democratic society, without such reservation. The argument in favour of merit is, among other things, that depriving the American white in this manner of a right violated situation has constitutional right. Strangely for a long time the supreme court of U. S. A. did not choose to adjudicate in this dispute leaving the matter to state courts to decide. Last year at the peak of the controversy the federal supreme court chose to judge the issue which it decided in a manner which leaves the matter where it was. The court being evenly divided one member of the court performed remarkably by helping in drafting a decision which enables both parties to say that each has won. This reference is quoted to show that social questions such as reservations for backward sections of a society arise in advanced countries also, and a satisfactory solution is difficult there too, But Kashmir is in some significant respects different. The population of non Muslims in the valley is not more than two and a quarter lakhs while Muslims are over 22 lakhs. Reservation for such preponderating majority sounds on surface a bit anomalous, but the majority was seriously disadvantaged historically and a reservation all round was certainly indicated. The results achieved have amply justified the policy. Colleges, schools, hospitals, technical departments are manned by Muslims. This is as it should be. A significant question now arises, is reservation still necessary? While this question is being mooted in regard to reservation for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes else where in the country it is hardly heard here where it has far greater relevance.

It is my conviction that continuation of this practice

is proving a hurdle and will be increasingly so in the future in creating among coming Kashmiri Muslim generations qualities of self-reliance and mental and moral prowess. Some years ago it so happened that the first twenty six places at an examination went to non Muslims in the valley. Only half of the number were given the benefit of their position. My devotion to the cause of the disadvantaged sections in the valley as well as in Jammu was, I believe, well known at the time, but my sense of fair play was outraged at the injustice to the ignored persons who had in the meantime gone to the supreme court for redress. I spoke in anguish to the Chief Minister (Mr. G. M. Sadiq) who was not aware of the decision apparently taken by one of his Cabinet colleagues. He put the matter in true perspective when he said "Why were not all the 26 admitted? Why do not a few of you sit and deliberate on this matter? After all when our colleges and schools are full of these students (meaning Muslim students) and they have all the facilities and still do not come at the top, something is wrong some where."

There is another side to the issue. There is, as law or rule to my knowledge which say that there should be reservation in admissions or recruitments and promotions. The result has however, to be produced. This is done undoubtedly through a devious policy of manipulation at various points and by all sorts of functionaries. This is the saddest aspect of the matter & explains the secretiveness of administrative practices.

In 1978 a small leaflet, brought out on fine paper and in fine print was published in Jammu. It bore no name of the author. It was well written and was mainly directed to leaders of the agitation which had recently occurred. Towards the end the author or authors changed course and attacked in an almost virulent terms the members of the minority community in Kashmir who it was alleged were in receipt of admissions & jobs & promotions far in excess of what their numbers warranted. To set them right and clear them out of the way for the progress of Muslims in Kashmir and Dogras in Jammu some "Social engineering" would have to be done. This term amused many & frightened some. What was intended people ask anything from ouster from services

through some governmental action to a jogran of the western style, There was much debate over who could have written it. Nothing came out of the pamphlet which was distributed among members of the state Assembly in the hall itself. But it left a bitter taste in the mouth of many sensitive persons who thought that though this paper cannot represent the official policy of the ruling party, its presentation and contents could reasonably be thought to reflect loud thinking of some members of the majority community be the leaders or as some thought responsible Government officers. The moral of this reference is that policy formulation embodying the considered view of Government in respect of admissions & recruitment & promotions would cleanse the atmosphere & lead to open and scientifically run Government.

There is no reason to believe that if merit is given the status it deserves in a democratic order all places or even too many of them will go to members of the minority community. It is demographically not possible. Even if it happens it can be in the rarest of situations and it will be all to the social good. The truth of the matter is that admissions and recruitment & promotions by & large seem to have been politicised. It would be a social improvement of no mean order if these matters are released from this bondage and handed over to, where they belong, the academic institutions and the public service commission and of course the departmental chiefs. It is the privilege,

indeed. the duty of the Government, to oversee institutions to ensure that left free to function they do so with utmost integrity. Utopian though it may sound, it is easy of accomplishment by 2000 A. D. All that is needed is political will and an enlightened opinion.

Secularism as an article of faith of the ruling party is time tested. Vividly we remember the heroic resistance put forth by the party's volunteers to the invading hordes from across the border to protect the minorities in the valley. This was in the fall of 1947. The country as a whole stands as an oasis in the south East Asia professing this faith. There are internal threats to it occasionally here and outside the State. Recently, the emergence of orthodox fundamentalism abroad has the potential of strengthening the potency of these threats both in the valley and elsewhere in the country creating a chain of reaction for orthodox fundamentalism is not the monopoly of only one section of the people. This challenge will be faced by the people successfully perhaps only if leadership stands firm, in its belief that religion and affairs of the state belong to two mutually exclusive universes and that in the management of the society's economic social & political affairs the scientific method should be employed. This is the chief attribute of modern civilization. I have every hope that the valley will continue to be the torch bearer in this regard for the whole country and will be in that position in 2,000 A. D.



KASHMIR IN 2000 A. D.

by

D. N. Kaul, Srinagar

The Editor, while prescribing the subject for this year's annual of the *Vitasta*, which he has, was apparently quizzing the writers into making essays into futurology. This science, as contrasted with its psychichalf brother & occult lore, astrology, is new to this part of the world. The Asian mind in general and the Indian mind in particular are tuned to the wavelength of 'Kismet' or Fate with hardly any scope left for the exercise of free will and volition by the human ingenuity. Belief in predestination which over the centuries has become almost a characteristic of our genes has made us deterministic and therefore given us the feeling of being abject tools in the hands of Fate or a Hardipan Necessity. Futurology, on the other hand, is a science which fosters cold and almost clinically detached analysis of the socio-politico-economic forces at work and the probable shape they are likely to assume in the foreseeable future in the backdrop of the present socio-economic order. It is therefore assumed that the shape of things to come is to be protected by these criteria.

Aliru Toffler in his celebrated book *Future Shock* attempted a portrayal of the problem of adaptation which Man will be confronted with the bewilderingly rapid change which the development of science and technology are going to usher into the world of the foreseeable future. He apprehended that some people would find adjustment beyond their adaptive faculties and thus get cast on the scrapheap or end up as anachronistic curios. It is doubtful if the rapidity of change envisioned by Toffler will come to pass, but I am sure that Kashmir will not be attacked by it. In coming to that conclusion one has only to quantify and evaluate the extent of change that has come over Kashmir, both physically and in the attitudes & modes of living of the people of this sequestered valley which Nature has ensconsed into the deeper recesses of the Himalayan ranges. During the more than three

decades of the post independence period, no perceptible physical change has taken Srinagar into its sweep. A few unsightly buildings have come up along some important roads, the Boulevard, the rage of the waterscape lover, has degenerated into a commercial centre, reminiscent of the cheap merchandise which used to be exhibited and vulgarly displayed in the shop windows of Lahore's Anarkali Bazar. In the process, the green foothills of the Shankaracharya have vanished, yielding place to brick and mortar. The city, the downtown of Srinagar, where king Praversena actually founded it and where Zainul Abedin & Akbar ruled and held court is as sordid as shabby as immutably ugly and dirty as it used to be when I was a toddler and subsequently an ungainly, dowdily attired school boy, nearly half a century ago. In a talk from the Radio Kashmir on the subject of "A profile of Srinagar" I highlighted the fact that the shopkeepers of the Shah-e-Hamadan Mohalla which I walked through everyday on my way to my school continued to wear the lotus-eater, the lackadaisical air which characterised their images then. They watch the endless procession of the passers by, the tongas, the honking motor cars and other hackney carriages with the same "I couldn't care less" air. The response, to the queries of actual & protective customers continues to be a forced lisping of monosyllables, as if the shopkeeper were regarding the customer as an unwelcome intruder on his daydreaming. The late, Mr. Sadiq, while speaking about the Kashmiris penchant for withdrawal and laziness & his quasi-practical attitude to life, remarked rather aptly that even a sleeping pariah dog would survey an oncoming tonga from a corner of his halfopen eye to gauge if he was likely to come into the way of the revolving wheel & once finding that he was not, he would relapse into his midday siesta with a symbolic shake of his shaggy ear.

There is, however, a change in the way of living

of a section of the people in Srinagar, the *nouveaux riche*, who have come by big chunks of money either out of the so called govt. spending on welfare measures or by hoodwinking tourist or by smuggling the contraband & in diverse other ways. "Behind every fortune there is a crime" said Balzac the French writer. But just now, that is neither here nor there. The tastes of this class, as is inevitable, are characterised by vulgarity and showiness, a race after tinsel and fleur-de-lis neckties of bleeding gaudy colours & worst of all, an uncivilised aggressive demeanour towards one & all. Even the well to do taxi drivers sneer contemptuously at customers they think are not rich enough. The finer tastes for art and literature and the catholicity & breadth of view which were the hallmarks of Kashmiri culture are fast vanishing. Those who are still on the fringes are desperately trying to ape the *nouveaux riche* & in the process cutting ridiculous figures.

The rest of the people, in the villages and in the downtown Srinagar have been touched lightly, if at all, by the three decades after independence & the changes they are supposed to have brought. In the villages the baker or the meatseller may have a transistor continuously blaring 'filmi' music on his shop or an odd shop window in Sogam in the Lolab Valley may display a few Max Factor cosmetics. That is about all. Basically the life pattern, the attitudes, the reflexes, the reactions, the misconceived insularity, the mediaeval ritual on births deaths & marriages remain unaltered. An indifference to the pace of the flow of time, an important characteristic of agricultural civilizations as contrasted with industrial ones where even a split second counts, also remains unchanged. That is what made a saying that I. S. T. means Indian Stretchable Time; this is what it does mean especially in Kashmir.

With this data and backdrop one could easily delineate the broad contours of the state of life in Kashmir 20 years hence. These will broadly continue to be the same. The *nouveaux riche* will have been succeeded by an equally noisy, gaudy, brash generation; the comparatively poor will have remained unchanged. In fact they may have become more indigent. The absence of motivation in all fields, observed so aptly by Walles Heugen, will be there. The pitcher will still be going to the well in the poor sections of the city

(or the public tap) and in villages. As portrayed by Barnard Shaw in *Appelcart*, the electoral balloon will keep going up in the sky every five years with all its fanfare and while the people will gaze upwards to follow its ascent, the pick-pockets will have done their work. Their hands will, of course, have dipped into fuller, richer pockets. Violence in public & private life will have increased & the Kashmiri, with a rather weak moral spine (Sir Owen Dixon observed that) will in the process have become more resistant to emancipatory and liberalising winds of change.

The Kashmiri Pandit, an insignificant element in Kashmir's socio-economic set up, will have also remained more or less insulated from the broad sweep of technological & intellectual changes that will have overtaken the western world in the next two decades. More & more members of this community will have gone abroad & distinguished themselves in academic & engineering fields but those that will continue in Kashmir will be unscathed by the March of Time. Outmoded rituals will be very much there. Those coming from abroad on brief visits will talk of America or Canada & the pace of life in these countries, they will speak of new gadgets like the musical tooth brushes or mechanical shoe polishers, but they will, with effortless ease, succumb like lambs to the ante-diluvian ritual, demand doweries, sit cross-legged on mats talking of the good old days and decry the immorality of the work, as if our mode of life is more moral & righteous. The dichotomy, and a cross one at that, between the lives of these people the humbug & the mumbo-jumbo in their thinking & manner will have only become more glaring.

The Kashmiri or the Indian for the matter of that is a *seviathan*, only cataclysmic upheaval will ruddy shake him. Such an upheaval is not on the cards. It does not appear like taking place in the slice of time we are trying to look through. We remain an ancient backward people. Looking too much backwards towards our so-called glorious past has made us stiff-necked. Our ethos has acquired stasis, if not outright decadence. The importations of what V. S. Naipal calls the Mummy-Daddy culture by a section of an anglicised urban community only makes the changelessness of the Indian mass more glaring, more pathetic.

An American student in Oxford stepped on a lawn in the University campus and impressed by the soft, velvety feel, asked the British student nearby : "How do you get such grass ?" The Britisher with the typical unperturbed look said, "Simple. All you have to do is to mow it & then roll it ; mow it & roll it & go on doing so." Rather naively the American student asked

"How long does one have to do so ?" Again with his British aplomb, the student replied. "For about 300 years". The American had thought that good grass could be produced quickly, synthetically.

Does the same hold good of developing a finer species of human beings ?

KASHMIR—2000 A. D.

by

J. N. Ganhar. Srinagar

What will Kashmir be like in 2000 A. D. is rather difficult to visualise. But one projection that can confidently be made is that twenty years hence Kashmir will be what the Kashmiris make of their *moj-kasheer* (Mother Kashmir)

Kashmir or rather its people, were faced with the most difficult choice of the long and chequered history of their lovely homeland when India was partitioned in 1947 A. D., largely on religious, or rather, communal grounds. An obvious choice for the Kashmiris—vast majority of them Muslims—was to opt for the Islamic state of Pakistan. But thanks to the far-sighted leadership of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, nurtured by intimate association with the greatest Kashmiri of our times, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the people of the valley threw their lot with secular, democratic, India. This was to many, an unexpected decision. But there it was, despite the fact that Pakistan unleashed unprovoked aggression on the state of Jammu and Kashmir, and Pakistan's powerful western friends also did what they could short of war, to secure the coveted possession of the heavenly valley to their faithful ally.

The Indo-Kashmir relationship has not been without its strains and snags during the last thirty-three years of the country's independent existences but these have been only minor and have happily been resolved to the satisfaction of both sides. It can therefore be safely asserted that the relationship has stood the test of time and it is hoped, that with continuing good will and trust on both sides, it would grow closer still and in the year 2000 A. D. the state of Jammu and Kashmir would be fully integrated with the rest of the country.

Kashmir State comprises three distinct geographical and ethnic entities. But it would be rash to suggest

that they have been fully integrated. Understandably the ruling party's attention has largely been concentrated on the valley and this has caused dissatisfaction and distrust in Jammu and Ladakh regions, leading to demands for decentralisation and autonomy, and occasionally even for secession by extremist elements. But it is hoped that during the next 20 years the rulers that be will progressively rise above provincial, communal and caste considerations—the process has already started—and the three units will pull together as one common entity. To ensure this, greater attention would have to be paid to Ladakh and the other less developed areas of the state and all attempts to divide their people on narrow communal or similar other considerations will be frowned upon and frustrated during the interregnum. And in ensuring this the centre has its own role to play.

Our country has opted for the secular, democratic way of life. But during the past thirty and odd years of its independent existence the political landscape has not unoften been disfigured by the eruption of ugly communal incidents. We cannot point an accusing finger on any one state, party or people (community) for this sorry spectacle. All of us have to share the blame for it. And by the same token, all of us—the governments more than the others—have to do the best we can to ensure an end to them.

It must readily be acknowledged that, by and large, the Government at the centre and the Governments in the states, have moved with alacrity to curb communal incidents once they have raised their ugly head. But that is not enough. Conditions must be created so that such incidents do not at all take place. This cannot be done by the appointments of commissions and committees only. For an effective solution, the problem has to be tackled at the root.

We have no doubt achieved political independence but it lacks economic control. The rich are growing richer and the poor poorer day by day and corruption is growing at a phenomenal pace. In fact the people's faith in democratic values is fast eroding by the growing corruption and nepotism at all levels, and especially in high places. And it is not uncommon that it is the disgruntled politicians and vested interests that crassly manoeuvre communal and caste clashes. But they always get off scot free. This is as true of Kashmir as of any other place in the country.

To rid the country of the disgrace of communal incidents the people—fifty per cent of whom are living below the poverty line—have to be assured economic equality. A beginning in this direction can be made by putting a limit on incomes and property and introducing a national wage policy. And in this our state has a major role to play,

Kashmir, it will be recalled, gave a lead to the country by its far reaching and effective land reforms. And on the basis of his pronouncements before assuming power in February 1975, it was hoped that Sheikh Saheb would lead the country in assuring economic equality to the people and by giving them an administration free from corruption. But though he began well he soon strayed from the narrow path today not only in the gap between the rich and the poor growing apace but corruption is rampant in all walks of life. But happily our great leader who has himself come from a poor family, is still with us and it is hoped that he will yet take effective steps to reduce economic disparities and corruption which will be an example to Governments and people else where.

... ..

A kindly nature has endowed our motherland (Kashmir) with incomparable beauty and charm. But we have not been able to maintain it much has to add to it. Though the present Chief Minister deserves credit for launching a massive drive to open up the interior of Srinagar and the Dal Development project, yet the new colonies like Raj Bagh, Indra Nagar, Iqbal colony, Chhanapora and the habitations coming up around the Hari Parbat hill will be the new slums

in the year 2000 A. D. So haphazard is their growth and so neglected their sanitation, etc. Thanks to the unimaginative town-planning open spaces like Hazuri Bagh, Lal Mandi, Gol Bagh and even the Polo Ground, are fast being encroached upon and in the year 2000 A. D. the city Beautiful (Srinagar) may have to do without park and playgrounds. Though the Dal Lake is mercifully being reclaimed, the Anchar and Khushal-lakes may there be no more in 2000 A. D. So great is the rate of encroachment on them. And the wular the largest fresh water lake in India—would also have shrunk considerably.

Over the years our capital, Srinagar, has acquired the unenviable reputation of being one of the dirtiest cities in the country. If the present be any indication, the city will be dirtier still 20 years hence.

The communications network would, however, be much more extensive and places like Amarnath, Gangabal and Kaunsar Nag would be accessible by air also. In fact it is hoped that in another 20 years time, the Governments and the people of Kashmir would have fully awakened to the importance of Hindu shrines like Khirbhavani, Hari-Parbat, Martand (Mattan) and Jwalamukhi for attracting more and more people to Kashmir from the rest of India and not only would the Bhairavnath shrine at Chhattabal have been opened once again but the encroachments on the Hari Parbat Hill, including the abominable poultry sheds on its eastern flanks would also have been removed.

Tourism would have grown tremendously and in the year 2000 A. D. Kashmir would be teeming with visitors from all over the country and all parts of the world. The hotel industry would have advanced by leaps and bounds and paying guest system would be enjoying a boom. In fact there might be a powerful movement for nationalisation of the hotel industry and the house boats may have become a relic of the pasts.

Kashmir has, in the recent past, come to lean heavily on labour from less affluent states like Bihar and Orissa for its labour and in the year 2000 A. D. our labour force may well be altogether non-Kashmiri.

Considering the growing demand for Kashmir's famed apples and the anxiety of our orchardists and

the rulers to export more and more of them, it might be difficult to come by a Kashmiri apple, apricot or pear in the valley in 2000 A. D. and we might have to depend for our fruit requirements entirely on oranges and bananas from outside the valley or apples and

pears imported from other states and, of course, for our food requirements we would still have to depend on outside supplies, thanks to the half hearted interest of our rulers in family planning.

We End of the Century

by

A. N. Raina, New Delhi

Perhaps for the first time a realistically bold step has been taken by a well meaning Editor to ask some of the writers for their considered views on the future of our *Biradari* during the two decades from now. Since the twentieth century is to come to its close it seems appropriate to get a clear picture of our socio-economic position along with our attainments in culture. This problem is not as easy as it appears. It does not require a probe for it is not a single problem to be discussed in its multifarious perspective.

Our *Biradari*, if accepted as a community, shines as a living organism through out the history of India. Small, very small in numbers though, the members of this community could not create a mass impresslon, but lead the masses in war and peace. The fact remains that wherever the members of this community settled they served as "Glow worms" to guide the path of peace progress and harmony.

A synoptic review of the role of this community will help us to understand the potential of these people whose story of life, better still living, begins long before Kalhan Pandit wrote his "Rajtarangini" towards the middle of the twelfth century. This first historical work in Indian literature by this Kashmiri Pandit formed a good guide to posterity for historical research. For the first time history separated itself from the legend and the myth.

Remarkable as it seems these inhabitants within the Himalayan girdle evolved an excellence of culture that enriched civilization. What is more, the spirit of India was "Purged from the dross of creeds" and the nature of ultimate Reality (Brahman) enunciated by Sankar Vedanta was found wanting when Kashmir Shaivism "reconciled the dualism of Sankhya with the monism of Vedanta, "This is in itself an achievement of very great spiritual attainment infusing the concept of being Shiva.

With the spread of Buddhism, after 250 BC, Viharas were built and learning spread. The new faith could not drive out Shaivism out of this land about which Max Muller wrote : "If everything of India perished but one discovery of her's remained that alone would keep her immortal in history ; this is the discovery of the unity of all things in the Atman," Steadily though Buddhism suffered a change to suit the land where Tantrism from Shaivism soaked into Buddhism. While developing a sacred pantheon Buddhism was served by the Kashmiri Brahmins towards a harmonious fusion. This is an example of how isms were softened to suit man for spiritual and mental progress without creating any bitterness or rivalry. This process of fusion continued till Islam appeared and in the words of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, "None has ever doubted that Kashmiri Pandit as a community, are very intelligent, In fact this intelligence and adaptability is the secret of the existence of this small community."

In Kashmir hospitality was "rewarded" by a coupe when Ranchen shah, Tibetan Prince who had been granted refuge succeeded in over throwing the ruler. Thus Islam spread having the authority of the rulers. For over a century troubled times were followed by the peaceful reign of Badshah (1423—1474 AD) when this great monarch afforded an opportunity to his subjects to contribute for the development of this land. The Kashmiri Pandit played a distinct part enriching literature, philosophy, art, craft and culture.

Kashmiris, wherever they live, look up to their Himalayan home with longing eyes. Their mind is shadowed by everything beautiful in Kashmir from natural landscape to its spiritual depth sung by Abhinavgupta, Lalleshwari, Mulla Mohammad Tahir Ghani and others, The pride of owning such saints, philosophers and poets is there keeping alive the traditions of ages, A history of having passed through a common

crucible of suffering through historical time is also there. It is this pride or dignified longing of a glorious past that knit the Kashmiris outside in India, preserving thus their identity with customs and rituals even though the mother tongue was forgotten. The rituals & customs proved of satisfaction to claim the cultural grandeur of the ancestral home. This became clear when some Kashmiris left their homeland under historical stresses from time to time.

It is not only in ancient times that Kashmiris crossed the borders of their mountain home spreading spiritual education in Tibet where a great intellectual Shyam Bhatt (now Swami Thumbuta) gave a script to the Tibetans where he is worshipped even today.

In Buddhist time many Kashmiri Brahmins spread the message of Gautam in the remotest tracts establishing spiritual contacts, Shak Jashri Bhadia, a scholarly Brahmin went as far as China to preach the new doctrine. To the South Ratanjira may be mentioned for his stay at Bodh Gaya where he enlightened himself with the changing outlook of the new faith. The tradition of learning, practicing and a comparative study continued with these emigrants of divinity till the beginning of the modern times.

With the Muslim rule in Kashmir, Persian became the language of the Government and its offshoot Urdu became the language of the elite. Kashmir with its adaptability and quest for knowledge owned Persian to which the admirable contribution has been that of Tahir Ghani. Religion never stood in the way of knowledge which even today is regarded as the common heritage of man. Those of the Kashmiris of our community who settled in India (Lahore, Delhi, Agra, Lucknow, Kanpur, Allahabad) contributed admirably to this language. One need hardly emphasize the role of Ratan Nath Dhar 'Sarshar' Brij Narain 'Chakbast' Daya Shankar 'Naseem' Brij Mohan Dattatriya 'Kaifi' and a number of others who enriched Urdu. In the field of art and music there are many names remembered for their devotion to literature and art for the sake of knowledge.

As the British forced the western type of education on this country the Kashmiri Pandits took this type of education with zeal. It was not the intention to man

the offices with "angrezi babus" but to learn and practice the greatness of the English people. The highly qualified took to law to serve the country, Bishan Narain 'Dhar' whose writings in English appeared in journals at London when he was still in teens, is well known. The role of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru in establishing equality of man before law is the beginning of a crusade for justice. The role of Pandit Motilal Nehru in framing a constitution for a free dominion of India was an eye opener for the British constitutionalists. With the appearance of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on the stormy scene of Indian politics, extremist policy of the Indian National Congress organized itself with vigour and something more.

Whatever the reason a Kashmiri Pandit has a deep sense of history. Local environment means very little to him. His perspective is national, may be because of his numbers he cannot form an effective community in a region. But forces other than zonal engage his sensitive mind. This ideology of a wider perspective was advanced by Jawaharlal Nehru who brought in internationalism into play while fighting for independence. Advocacy for freedom in the English speaking world necessitated the establishing of the National Herald—an English daily under the editorship of Sri K. Rama Rao with an eminent journalist Sri M. Chalapathi Rao who has been editing this paper since about three decades. True to the tradition of a wider perspective Pandit Motilal Nehru had already started the Independent an English daily at Allahabad. All the Swarajist associates had supported this move. With Jawaharlal's "Herald", Internationalism and socialism made the people to think afresh and offer constructive criticism with courage and caution, "Herald" heralded the British against fascism and the leader-writer of the Foreign Page of the Herald was hailed as a statesman. It shows how a wider vision and Prophetic statesmanship engrossed Kashmiris from religion, philosophy and then to politics. Students of history are aware of the stress of internationalism resulting in forcing the British to allow India a representative Government of its own people. The role of China, America and other free countries is remembered and some names J. T. Sunderland, C. F. Andrews, Annie Beasant and others are still fresh in our memory. More than this Nehru's constant effort to liberate African colonies where Mahatma Gandhi had visualized a free India is a story of Prophetic statesmanship. With this background let

us see where this community stands at present when revolutionary changes have completely altered our Socio-economic conditions.

The question poses itself now : what is going to be the future of this community in the two closing decades (1981—1999) of the present century, It is difficult to predict the nature of change that the community shall undergo in these days of revolutionary trends in socio-economic set up.

The strings of culture have loosened and it may not be possible to preserve the splendid identity maintained, so far. The reasons are not far to seek.

It is the mother tongue that binds a group of people. Whatever be the economic disparity tongue ties minds and the spoken word signifies a unity deeper than any other thing in life. It has an appeal to one's heart, sentiments and impulses. Our mother tongue Kashmiri is disappearing as a binding sweet sound. Considering the age group of our community after 1950 the mother tongue echoes in our households outside Kashmir in the age groups of 1900—1980 (an age of 80 years which is very much high above average of 65 years). Even in Kashmir, Persian rooted Urdu words that imparted sweetness to Kashmiri as in poetry of Habba Khatun, Rasul Mir, Mahjur, Azad, Zinda Kaul, Nadim, Rahi and others are on a decline. English words have already invaded the vocabulary in Kashmir. One has only to listen to dialogue in an average Kashmiri household to determine the magnitude of this type of influence. Hardly the verbs are used in Kashmiri by even the middle aged now.

With tongue goes the script. Kashmiri has been unfortunate in this respect. One knows not where to move the finger. If Sanskrit (Devnagiri) is not acceptable the Persian script that has been in vogue could work. Even today the Kashmiri Pandits use this non-devnagiri (non Hindi) script in their almanac and what is more this Persian script is preferred in religious-philosophic prayers including Vedic hymns and Bhagwadgita. This practice has not minimized the religious fervour of this community, Even from the wider perspective and in keeping with the rational and scientific values the Roman script could be ideal but the approved Persio-Arabic script has not found favour with people at large. The result is obvious. The link script-devnagiri could bring Kashmiri at par

with other Indian languages and enable it to get widely read and appreciated for its richness in thought and style. **The Devnagiri script** has given an impetus to Dogri as a language. For those Kashmiri Pandits who have settled in India the Devnagiri script helps to keep the members informed about social events mostly domestic. As a service to language it may not be considered of much value. Here too the age group upto 70 or 80 with its education in Kashmir itself and feeling of deep roots in Kashmir is involved. Therefore, Kashmiri may last a decade more at best.

In education the Kashmiri who owned and contributed to all languages admirably is now on a path that has no bearing with the past. He passed through Sanskrit, Persian, Urdu and English but his Kashmiri continued as sweet tangent for reasons known to us. Woman is the repository of culture not man as much. Male labours, amasses what is useful but woman shapes with sympathy and subjective skill harmonizing mind and intellect. It is no more so. Western education has given a new outlook to our children and education of girls at the elementary stage and later teen-age leaves no scope for a revival to our cultural heritage within the framework of our system of education. Marriages a natural corollary have widened the scope of choosing life partners from other communities. This in itself brings a merger distinctly on the paternal side for males. Even though apparent, the tendency to shut one's eyes to this mixing, not unhealthy though, cuts at the very roots of homogeneity prized for an age long cohesion.

As already mentioned technical education, the craze of our time, has upset the norms of our established traditions as financial prosperity compared to emoluments in India has given a chance for emigration to U. S. A., U. K. and other developing countries. Domestic life under foreign conditions leaves little scope for treasured ideals to be put into practice.

Kashmiri Pandits are not Parsis. They lack capital; as such investment is not possible for them. Par excellence deputes the members of this community cannot afford risk involved in Big Business that could absorb educated youth. Service politics continues and even those who could afford some change from the routine of service, preferably government, refrain from doing so. Service continues to be the salt of life. Howsoever high a person the tendency is to take

pride in service. Subjection of ages and now compulsions of majority have created a psychology of insecurity resulting in mania for jobs.

There was a sort of lure for the homeland. Important functions like marriages, thread ceremonies and the like provided a chance to revive to visit Kashmir, our ancestral land. But the chances are diminishing now. Obviously the time factor and busy breakneck life now, that we are in, the atomic era conquering speed. Nature in broad sense does not interest us. We get distanced from its charm and beauty. Those of us who do not believe in this changed attitude are lead astray by a sort of get together at Delhi, Bombay Calcutta and other places. Such gatherings are of social importance, not cultural but while probing our minds, it seems a temporary 'trance' of joy in the community, such metamorphosis has been inevitable for the sensitive minds of our community that suffered a brain drain from their homeland. The only satisfaction being that wherever the Kashmiri Pandit settled he worked hard to show his utility with faith and fortitude.

During the twenties of the present century when the Bolshevik Revolution was a success in Russian aristocracy and upper middle class advocated socialism in Britain while opposing the labour party in elections. This tendency spread with us for a long while giving names like Abhinav, Utpal, Dhru etc. to our children but debarring them from a study of our language and religion. One cannot get good of both the worlds at the same time. Experiments of this type have failed and it is to be a wishful thinking.

Rituals are there but observed more in breach than in observance. Even in Kashmir, sanctity of rituals has diminished simply because the community did not attend to this religio-philosophic need. Depending on the assumption that those of the Kashmiri Brahmins (Purohits) who were wedded to the performance of rituals (Vedic & Shaiva-tantric), *Kriti*, would consider their occupation as a rigid compulsion. This could not be as the changing phase of the community with Urdu and English education, in the first half of the present century, opened a field for the economic betterment of the Kashmiri Pandits who took to western education with all earnestness. It resulted in a considerable rise in the financial standard of the

educated who neglected the priestly class. As custodians of religion and rituals this thin layer of the community gradually gave up its studies in Sharda, Sanskrit and *Langaksh Nirvana Kriti* and took to western education. In art, music and painting contribution of these *Purohits* had been substantial. In Sanskrit learning to some of these Brahmin scholars (grammar, Shaiv shastra, six schools of philosophy, astrology etc.) attained a remarkable excellence till the middle of the century.

The position in this regard is superficial now as there is hardly any shastra-knowing Brahmin engaged in the performance of rituals. Those engaged in *Kriti* now are first a few who may not have the requisite grounding in fundamentals. As such the retaining of rituals appears bleak. One is reminded of Guru Gobind Singh who when asked about the future of Sikhism answered that every second son should be offered to *Granth*, if Sikhism is to preserve and thrive. In our community the luxury of discussing the future of rituals appears now a sort of hypocrisy.

The only place where a cultural centre for Kashmiri Pandits is possible to develop is the pamposh enclave in the neighbourhood of Nehru place in New Delhi. This enclave is the creation of the Kashmiri Co-operative House Building Society with the definite object of "Maintaining their culture and Traditions". Registered in 1950 the society purchased land at Kalkaji where modern amenities (Colleges, Schools, Market, Cinema, Play Grounds, Underground drainage, Water electricity) are available. The development of Nehru Place to the east of this Enclave has immensely added to the locational, commercial and cultural importance of this settlement.

Delhi is the only place where such a centre could develop. Besides the capital, Delhi is the only meeting place from all over India where our social moorings could be strengthened to save our existence as a community with its glorious past.

This settlement is blooming like a lotus *PAMPOSH* under the divine auspices of Mata Kalkaji and the good wishes of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Place. The undulating relief to the south and west is a boon to this site with bracing wind from the north. The following table needs a study.

PAMPOSH ENCLAVE

- (1) No. of plots for residential purposes... 154
(2) No. of Units housed at Present... ... over 1000
(3) Land plots (Area wise)
- | | | |
|----|---------------|----|
| A. | 700 sq. yards | 20 |
| B. | 450 sq. " | 36 |
| C. | 300 sq. " | 50 |
| D. | 200 sq. " | 50 |

Area for cultural Activities

Area for school...	...	2.5 acres
Area for Temple...	...	0.246 acres
(Now with shiva temple, lawn, garden for religious & social functions)		
Parks...	...	0.27 acres
Area for housing service		
Personnel...	...	0.094 acre
Residential land area...	...	400 sq. yards

(At Shakti Nagar, Delhi to be used for a community House for Biradiri who will stay in it while at Delhi.)

The Kashmiri Samiti Delhi is the centre of activity for the Kashmiris in the capital. The "Koshur Samachar" is now the recognized official organ of this association with its excellent publications in its special Numbers (Lal Ded and Zinda Kaul) besides the monthly appearance of the socio-cultural life of the members throughout the country. The Calcutta association is actively engaged in consolidating the community and so are the similar associations at Bombay, Allahabad, Agra, Bangalore and other places too.

All that is needed now is to develop the Pamposh Enclave for consolidating work done at other centres like the other brethren who speak other Indian Languages like Tamil, Telegu, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Kankani, Assamese, Bengali etc. These languages have socio-cultural centres of their own where members from all over India have facilities to stay, study and converse with their brethren. Such a cohesive centre is urgently needed for the community for which the $2\frac{1}{2}$ acre land close to Nehru Place (New Delhi) is a logical choice.

The society has recently made some long term and some short term educational and creative programmes which would meet the needs of its members.

The society has made a small beginning with the establishment of a primary school which is presently housed in canvas tents. The effort was made possible because of the allotment of a plot of land ($2\frac{1}{2}$ acres) by the Lt. Governor of Delhi.

It has now become necessary to raise funds immediately for the establishment of a permanent structure to house the school. For this purpose, the Kashmir Education Society appeals to all lovers of education to make generous donations. The society has to meet a deadline date, which is fixed by the Delhi Administration for the completion of the building within the next 18 months. The present appeal therefore needs an urgent and a high degree of response from the benevolent donors.



The Lotus in Bloom—*Pholwan Pumphosh*

by

D. K. Kachru, New Delhi

My mind goes back to the early fifties. Dr. Kailash Nath Katju was then the widely respected & popular Governor of West Bengal. Earlier he had held, with equal distinction, the gubernatorial chair in Orissa, a land he loved dearly. He paid an official good will visit to Bhubaneshwar & Puri late in 1950. Deeply religious minded as he was, a visit to Orissa's famous temples was a must specially the temples of Lord Lingraj at Bhubaneshwar and of Lord Jagannath at Puri. I was then posted in the temple town of Bhubaneshwar—the upcoming new Capital of Orissa. The pleasant duty of taking Dr. Katju around the Lingraj Temple was entrusted to me. Dr. Katju's name was then a legend in Orissa. The people of Bhubaneshwar gave him a rousing & warm welcome. I conducted him round the temple. The temple visit over, Dr. Katju departed from the official programme & came over to our residence nearby. He spent almost an hour with us & got particularly engrossed in conversation with my father, Pandit Damodar Dass, who had joined us in Orissa a few months earlier. He plied him with eager questions about the conditions in Kashmir, the fate of those staying behind, & of those that had come out. I was a deeply interested listener. The picture that finally emerged out of this conversation seemed rather grim. But Dr. Katju was no pessimist. He said that over the centuries Kashmiris had been the victims of many vicissitudes. The present one seemed to be the latest in the series. The sons & daughters of the Land of Kashyap had never gone under. He was confident that with their innate intelligence, their infinite capacity for hard work & above all, their keen sense of adaptability, the Kashmiris would again prove true to their history, make more than good, & come on the top as of yore in various walks of life in the greater & wider fields of India. He said this was a matter as best of a decade or so. He was confident that he would live to see the day.

The prophecy has come true. Kashmiris have again distinguished themselves in various & varied walks of life in the post 1947 era, not only in India but also in distant lands abroad against keen competition. None of us, of the out-going generation, could have imagined this thirty years ago though we may have prayed for it. Today Kashmiri doctors, engineers, educationists, men-of-letters, artists, administrators, scientists, defence services officers, businessmen, industrialists & business executives—and this is not the full list—have won their spurs throughout India & in many far-flung parts of the world. One of them even out-Onassised the late Onassis in the world of shipping. One might aptly quote a great Kashmiri, the poet-philosopher, Iqbal :

“Kuchh bat hai ki hasti mittee nahin hamari”

History has repeated itself ; for the earlier migrants from Kashmir also generally did exceptionally well wherever they settled down.

To quote what Jawaharlal Nehru said in his well-known article on “Kashmir” in July 1940 “A handful of them (Kashmiri Pandits) who migrated to other parts of Northern India during the last two hundred years or so have played an important part in public life & in the professions & services in India, out of all proportion to their small numbers” Earlier he strongly exhorted Kashmiris to “play a brave part in the mighty happenings of today, in the joy of taking part in the great movements which are changing this old world of ours”. The later recent migrants have more than lived upto the exhortation of their great and noble compatriot. They have brought further glory to their ancient mountain home-land & to the rest of free & independent India.

The wide dispersal of the members of the community in post 1947 India has brought about a mini-

revolution in the old social ties & the time honoured sets of values. The joint family, once an impregnable castle of social security & stability, is in shambles. The old & once cherished sets of values have under-gone a sudden metamorphosis. Thousands of young Kashmiris, exiles from the loved home-land of their fore-fathers, are utter strangers today to all that gave meaning & content to the lives of the older generation, however cribled & confined these might have been ; a heavy, price indeed. The old moorings, both social & cultural, are fast being lost. We should not & must not however lose our identity. How best to ensure this is of vital importance to our cultural & social survival. The best part has to be redeemed, re-developed, & gorged afresh into a living link that binds us together & does not stifle. This is a question that exercises the minds of many of us & demands a timely, answer, and a practical & pragmatic one.

Outside Kashmir, Delhi has the largest concentration of Kashmiris. Next come perhaps Calcutta & Bombay, in that order. There is hardly any part of India where Kashmiris are not to be found today. From Simla in the far north to Trivandrum in the farthest south.

Abroad also there is concentration of them in the United Kingdom of Great Britain & Ireland, in other parts of Europe including the Scandinavian countries, in USA & Canada. Kashmiris have also settled down in Australia & Mauratius. I understand that in UK & USA Kashmiri Associations are already in existence. The development & maintenance of some cultural links is imperative though. at the face of it, a seemingly uphill task. How best this can be achieved is again a question that merits urgent thought & attention on the part of Kashmiri Associations both in India & abroad. An action oriented plan is indicated.

During the earlier centuries of migrations from the valley, the migrant Kashmiris settled down mostly in the then Panjab, the then Rajasthan States & in Uttar Pradesh in Northern India. A few went as far as Cattuck & distinguished themselves there. They generally stayed together in what came to be known as Kashmiri Mohallas. In Delhi the Sita Ram Bazaar area was the hub of the old Kashmiri world. Similarly Lucknow & some other North Indian towns had their

Kashmiri Pockets/Mohallas. But ever-changing present day conditions make this difficult, particularly as the dispersals now are on a larger scale & in a very much vaster area, in a terribly congested and costly urban context. It therefore goes to the great credit of that far-seeing small land of Kashmiri youngmen in Delhi who had the capacity to look into and think of the future. They conceived and put into practical shape the idea of constituting a cooperative house building society. Some boubting Thomases, as is usual in such cases, scoffed and jeered at them. They persisted and inspite of dissensions kept moving forward. These few dedicated youngmen struck close together and ultimately succeeded in securing and developing a 26 acre site in South Delhi for the Kashmiri Co-operative House Building Society. It took the colony almost a quarter century to come up & be built upon. The young founding fathers of the early fifties are grey-haired old gentlemen today. But they are happy & proud of their achievement. The Pamposh Enclave is today the pride of us all : a "Pholwan Pamposh" indeed. It houses about 200 Kashmiri families. Pamposh the famed Lotus of our old home land—has really flowered into a mini-Kashmir in Delhi For those of us who live here, it is a small little Kashmir away from Kashmir sans, of course, the loved mountains, the chinars willows & poplars, the streams & rivulets & the lovely climate of the valley of the Gods. The dream that the few farseeing Kashmiri imigrants dreamed thirty years ago has become a beautiful reality : an achievement we can justly be proud of.

Delhi has been the capital of India from time immemorial. It is so today also. Pamposh therefore has a special significance & connotation in this context. It can most appropriately become the centre of the cultural & social life of migrant Kashmiris. Luckily a valuable piece of land, about 2 acres in area, in Pamposh enclave stands earmarked for a school. First preference in the allotment of this site had to be given to the Pamposhians. The Kashmiries Co-operative House Building Society approached the concerned authorihes for allotment of this plot of land some time ago. They were advised to set up an Educational Society for the purpose. The Kashmiri Education Society, Delhi already stood constituted from early years as a registered body. It was therefore inducted

into the field by the Kashmiri House Building Society. The land has since been allotted to the Society by the Delhi Administration. The terms of allotment are under settlement. A Nursery School is already being run at the site, a humble beginning of expectedly great things ahead.

Pamposh Enclave happily provides a cross-section of the community distinguished army officers, administrators, scientists, educationists, doctors, engineers, business executives & so on. These constitute a bank of many-faced talent on which the community can draw to further its plans for future for developing the school site into a Kashmiri Cultural & Social Centre : an all India an international link. Some distinguished Kashmiri youngmen are already giving thought to the preparation of an outline scheme for the purpose. Proper planning & finance are essential. The various Kashmiri Associations in the country & even abroad, & the all-India body formed recently, can appropriately consider the matter in all its aspects so as to give the idea a practical shape in the greater & better interest of the community at large for wherever we are our Kashmir should be there with us with its hoary & ancient cultural heritage, its message of love & harmony as preached centuries ago by Lal Ded & Nund Rishi & practised by recent day Kashmiris like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. Kailash Nath Katju, Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru, & Pandit Anand Narain Mulla to name only a few out of the shining galaxy of many.

The migrant Kashmiris who dreamt of a mini-Kashmir in Delhi three decades ago had all the odds against them. Their vision & determination have ultimately won the day for us all. The youngmen who dream today of a Kashmiri Cultural Centre on a global basis in Pamposh will have many many hurdles to cross. But their vision & determination, coupled with the co-operation of members of the community elsewhere in India & abroad should make this greater dream also a reality in the not too distant a future : a greater & bigger *Pholwun Pamposh*.

My Son, Upendra Kishan, a senior business executive & a Calcutian till recently, is an advocate of the formation of a "Kashmiri Cultural Centre"

(KCC) here. He has drawn up some proposals in this connection some other enthusiastic youngmen are also of the same view, therefore no apology for reproducing the operative portions of these tentative proposals as an enclosure ; a vital enclosure to this exercise. These need examination & discussion so that a proper consensus is evolved & an action oriented, bound programme put into operation.

The seed seems to have been sown : hopefully on fertile soil. Those of us who are almost nearing the Biblical span of three score & ten hope & pray that the seed will germinate soon & sprout into the mighty Chinar of our mountain home land in all its grandeur & glory.

Enclosure :

It is proposed that we set up a "Kashmir Cultural Centre (KCC)" an autonomous body under the sponsorship of Kashmir Education Society, but with independent membership and limited objectives.

This organization needs to be run by professionally competent full time staff who can devote themselves to the task of making the activities financially self-generating.

Why is it Required ?

- (i) Kashmiris as a cultural entity are fragmented and geographically scattered throughout the world. Being physically a small community, the probability of losing communication with the community and for the new generation to maintain its links with its heritage, a catalyst is required—KCC can bring our culture to your door-step.
- (ii) Recognized works of past masters—KCC can synthesize, analyse and translate for you.
- (iii) Culture in the form of dance, music, paintings, handicrafts—KCC can bring them to you.
- (iv) Works of creativity need to be promoted—KCC can try to help out. Organize with agencies, governmental and non-governmental, for financial aid, research grants, help in publication etc.
- (v) For scientific Research, KCC can plan to create facilities, library, living accommodation, financial help, liaison with national and international agencies. Travel and other supporting functions.

Why the Head Quarters at Delhi ?

- (i) Because Kashmiris are geographically scattered throughout the world, Delhi as the capital of our country has a high traffic of Kashmiris.
- (ii) Extremely good Communications with all parts of the country.
- (iii) Facilities are available at Delhi; Universities, Central Govt. offices and Foreign Embassies etc.
- (iv) Largest local population of Kashmiris outside Kashmir.

Membership Drive

Objective : To build up a secular membership that reflects the many facets of Kashmir culture :

1. All Kashmiri Societies Countrywide,
2. Important cultural bodies in Jammu & Kashmir state.
3. Important institutions/universities, who would be interested in Kashmiri studies.
4. All important researchers on Kashmir.
5. All prominent artists of Kashmir.
6. Prominent members of the Baradari.

Fund Collection

Most potential area for fund collection – Kashmir itself & other area.

Activities Proposed

Publications – Some example are given below :

- A. – Collected Works of Masterji
- Collected Works of Mehjoor
- Collected Works of Lal Ded
- Collected Works of Habba Khatoon.

Prominent Kashmiris – series

- 1) Nehru's – a) Motilal
b) Jawaharlal
c) Indira
d) Vijay Laxmi
- 2) Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah
- 3) Sadiq Sahib
- 4) D. P. Dhar

- 5) H. N. Kunzru
- 6) Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru
- 7) Dr. Kailash Nath Katju
- 8) Bakshi Gulam Mohammed
- 9) Zinda Kaul
- 10) Mahjoor
- 11) Anand Narian Mulla
- 12) Mir Kasim
- 13) D. N. Nadim
- 14) Ravi Tikoo
- Kashmiri Grammar
- Dictionary,

B. General Books

1. Kashmiri Travelogue
2. Kashmiri Landscapes
3. Kashmiri Painters
4. Kashmiri Carpets
5. Architecture and Monuments
6. Kashmiri Cuisine

Music (Cassettes)

- Folk Songs
- Santoor
- Popular songs.

Cultural Programmes

(Collabrate with ITDC/other marketing organizations)

- Kashmiri cultural week
- Drama groups
- Movies

Other Activities

- Art Gallery
- Club facilities/recreation
- Commercial centre
- Sales counters etc. for Kashmiri handicrafts.
- Rooming facilities
- Library
- Auditorium

Dowry Syndrome—New And In 2000 A. D.

by

Asha Dhar, Delhi

The birth of a girl is the instant traditional signal for a pervasive low mood in the family, which persists. The enthusiasm that the arrival of a male child generates is conspicuously absent even in the so-called sophisticated and 'enlightened' families. Our womenfolk are the ones who make the loudest noise : "*Lokche umre munj banew korimol*" — (at a young age the man has become the father of a girl).

The tone in the Kashmiri household changes gradually as the family gets used to the female child's presence. It is again the womenfolk who echo the wish : "*Hatbee, panun takdir heth yiyi panay !*" — (she will bring her own luck with her ;) One can visualise the put-up show of smiles but jubilation is missing.

Why is that our typical attitude on the birth of a female child? The explanations offered or tacitly understood, in or outside Kashmir, are varied. The Hindu ethos—the macrocosm of which the Kashmiri Pandit concept is the microcosm—cherishes the notion that only the male heir can perform important rituals for the ancestors, assuring their entry into the heaven. One wonders whether the simple *shrada* ceremony could perform such a miracle :

The continuation of lineage is another rationalisation : that the boy only carries and continues the name of the family. A big ego-satisfaction :

Rationalisations galore

Another notion is that the honour of the family rests squarely on the shoulders of the girls. Any deviation from the inter-generational traditional norms can spell dishonour to the family as well as the clan,

even though the latter is a dispersed entity in and outside Kashmir, after the Independence. The erring boys? The dotting answer is : "*Hatey mongmut hay choo, jinde roojten, paney gacchi theekh i*" — (we have longed for his birth. May God bless him with long life, he will reform himself in due course). To protect a girl (her chastity, mind you) becomes everybody's business, involving round-the-clock, strict vigilance over her movements.

A glorious culmination to this nerve-racking pother is to give away (there's a grain of charity in it) a virgin daughter in marriage to a man —protector/provider—with *patram pushpam* (humble gifts in dowry), yet another spiritual deed, The whole deal smacks of a joke and is simple financial jingoism in one form or the other, more so in the modern commercialization of marriages :

The devil for all the ill-disguised grudge towards the female child lies in the whole thought-pattern that the girl is going to another household, involving transaction and transfer of wealth—cash and kind from the bride's home to the groom's—a prerequisite to forging the bond between the two individuals. The attitude patterns of the parents as well as the in-laws of the girl emanate from this premise in varying intensities. An emotional syndrome comes to the surface again and again—on the one hand that a girl is a liability—a sort of millstone round the neck; and, on the other (as daughter-in-law) she is a 'rain cheque' (stretch and squeeze it as much as you can).

Commercialisation

Let us face the situation squarely : that the Kashmiri Pandit's mind, like the Hindu ethos all over the

country, is basically caught in an arithmetical tangle : 'economic investment' i. e., a boy versus "economic drain", i. e., a girl, Hence the bogey of *hai hai* about the birth of a girl raised all the time, the *karma* (and *shrads*) theory notwithstanding.

The root of the tangle is Dowry. The educated vehemently discard the old symbolic traditional norms and prefer to term it 'presents'. Terminological jugglery apart, this economic worm has eaten into the socio-psychological fabric of the Hindu society, leading to invidious discrimination between the sexes. The cantankerous disease is eating into the social system of the Kashmiri Pandit society. Loud (feigned !) protests against the persisting malady, the so-called socio-economic reformist movements, the lacuna filled by the lately acquired high educational attainments of the girls, coupled with economic attainments, have brought precious little behavioural transformation in the Kashmiri society. The girls continue to be weighed as a commodity in the marriage market. The whole transaction of marriage is commercialised : the concern being mainly to strike a neat financial bargain plus assure the multi-faceted attainments and performances : beauty, education, job, the capacity to pound the biggest load of washing, to scrub the largest number of utensils in the kitchen sink, *et al.* The demand is for a full-fledged working partner—emotional integration with the boy and the family has to follow (that also is ordained in the scriptures quoted *ad nauseum* :) The constraints and mental pressures brought to bear on girls are so many that one wonders whether they have any in-built safety mechanisms to bear the strains and yet come out largely unscathed.

Patram pushpam assumes the forms of a vulgar display of dowry, preceded by the demand for it. Resentment and complaints are endemic, if it is not up to the inflated demands of the boy's folks. Taunts and abuses persist throughout the woman's life—educated and those so-called sophisticated exposed to the wider world being no exception to admonishing the defaulting wife.

In the old simplistic society, *Vardhakshana* or *Stridhana* meant voluntary gifts of pure affection and remained largely modest. But the passage of time and the avarice of man distorted the many facets of family

life, including *Vardhakshana* or *Stridhana*. But whatever the genesis of the custom of dowry, it has practically come to connote a whole lot of things that what is given to the son-in-law or to his parents 'as a matter of right', whether in cash or in kind ; what is given to the bride by her parents at her marriage ; what is spent on the in-laws of the girl on entertainment of the *barat*, the travel expenses, an array of gifts and cash given by the girl's parents to the boy's parents and relations ; later expenses on the occasions of festivals, feasts and fasts, together with a clear emphasis on continuing the 'subsidy' for years to come. This baffling inventory, in any case, is apparently meant to enhance the value of a girl in marriage. From a token voluntary gift, it has assumed scandalous proportions, where bargaining, coercion and competition—keeping up with the Joneses—take precedence over the emotional alliance of the partners in marriage.

Resurgent Youth

This all sounds so very anachronistic especially when both sexes make equal contribution to domestic as well as the national life. And, mind you, so many of our young folks live in India and abroad, yet they are slaves to the age old corrupted social norms. One would expect the younger generation, exposed to the crosscurrents of world culture, to realise that this pernicious evil has wiped out many a poor household financially. Young women have been committing suicide, unable to witness the plight of their parents, their deprivation, indebtedness and the insults heaped upon them personally by the demanding in-laws. One also hoped that they would realise that the evil of dowry has been the biggest halter round a girl's neck, whose mental make-up has been crippled right in the penultimate decade of the 20th century ; and that social values have been corrupted, leading invariably to economic offences.

But, alas, no : Youngmen accept dowry with a shrug of shoulders, rationalising : "My parents want it." Others say *sans* pretension : "Why not ? Everybody is taking it."

Young women, having been trained to think that marriage is the 'be-all' and 'end all' of their lives, acquiesce in the prevailing system with a feeling of resignation. Others want it, holding forth. "Why

shouldn't we get dowry, when the boys get all the booty of the parental property?" Yet others are literally so many pawns in the unholy alliance between the two families and pay for it with unhappiness or worse.

Will the dowry custom die its own death in due course? That is the challenge of the remaining decades of the century. This reminds me of an episode in Kashmir in the forties. A handful of us, college girls, rallied together to raise our voice against our wrong social customs, especially the giving and taking of dowry. It was in the wake of a spate of suicides committed by young distraught women. An intensive action programme was initiated under the banner of All Kashmir Girls Association, to build up social pressures to eliminate evil customs affecting women. The response was a phenomenon. One of the Lahore weeklies, while eulogising our activities commented: *Sambal sambal ke pag dharna, duniya men kitne dokhe*; Our wise elders suggested that we rope in the boys into the movement. Aah, we did. The change of name of the parent-body to that of *All Kashmir Samaj Sudharak Sammittee* became necessary. The *Sammittee* achieved initial success. Boys and girls

took oaths to have dowryless marriages. Many couples kept the oath. Alas, the *Sammittee* died an unnatural death and too soon.

That was long ago. One is tempted to hope that such reforming zeal enters again our throbbing community. Fortunately for us, there is the urbane, dignified intelligentsia among the Kashmiri youth, showing up here and there. Theirs is a new world-view, as it were, which has a refreshing quality about it. Their thinking pattern shows the reflex of exhilarating currents criss-crossing round the world.

They can (I wish they should have :) have the needed grit and determination to challenge the traditional mores which have become moribund. They have to be the torch bearers to constructive, dynamic and action-oriented programmes for the society's betterment. To them, I say: Roll up your sleeves, young folks: Discard your hangovers. Let you boys and girls enter the life's arena in the last decades of the century with open minds and with unbounded confidence in the future of the community. Thus they can shape a better life in an understanding togetherness.

Kashmiri Working Women : Their Problems

by

(Mrs.) Veera Moza

One of the most significant developments in the recent past has been the speed with which Kashmiri women have successfully challenged men in various walks of life. This challenge has been more visible in the field of employment. The fact remains that, as a practice, Kashmiri women were not allowed to go in for white collar jobs at all and in no case be employed along with men. The tight compartments between men and women observed in Kashmiri society did not permit that kind of intermixing of men and women. Nor would the ego of a Kashmiri male permit him to accept a situation where a woman also became bread winner in their families. Having thus assigned only a secondary role to women, Kashmiri community, until recently, did not encourage women to work in offices. Except teaching, other professions were not given consideration.

However, one witnesses a big change in this direction now. The expansion of women's education has resulted in producing thousands of graduates and post-graduates with modern outlook and wider ambitions. Moreover, the general change in the social climate, that has taken place since 1947, has also emboldened many educated Kashmiri women to seek employment in professions in which they would have never thought of entering, such as engineering, law, medical sciences, journalism, banks, management, civil services, etc. One important factor, which has increased the number of working women is the economic conditions. Growing urbanisation coupled with increase in cost of living have forced many Kashmiri women to seek employment. It is this economic necessity which has changed the attitude of society towards women's employment. In fact, now the working brides are given much more preference. It may be mentioned here, in passing, that though Kashmiri men claim to believe in equality

with women, they clearly prefer the female to centre around the home tasks. But this economic pressure, especially in the big cities, where it is difficult to make both the ends meet, has compelled them to come out of the age-old tradition and allow women to work in professions considered till recently other than female occupations'.

It is true that women are now gainfully employed and in some cases have excelled men folk. It is also true that education and economic independence are now gainfully employed and in some cases have excelled men folk. It is also true that education and economic independence are important instruments for bringing about changes in the status of women. But it is sad that no one looks into the problems and dilemmas which a working woman faces, keeping in view the society she belongs. There is always a certain amount of tension within a working woman herself, her family and in her working relationship with others. Let us analyse the various factors which create conflicts and tensions in a working woman,

The first and most important factor responsible for this state of affairs is the traditional development. Customs, traditions and the very socialization process in the family, is such in our community that women are made to believe in two things—that a woman is inferior to a man in many ways and that the prime aim of her life is to serve her home, family & her husband, and to bear, rear and look after children. The average Kashmiri woman also traditionally looks upto and gives in to every demand of male. She believes in natural superiority of man. Right from the very beginning, unknowingly, a complex is created in a woman about her Incapabilities as an individual which makes her lack confidence in herself.

Another source of tension and conflict is the

practice. It has been seen that even in families where the housewife is engaged in equally paid & gainful employment as her husband, the obligation of carrying out household responsibilities falls almost exclusively on her. By and large, Kashmiri husband considers household chores and care of children to be rather solely the housewife's responsibility even when both the husband and the wife have similar hours of work.

Even for a wife, and especially for a mother, the internal needs of a family come first. If and when husband is transferred or moves to another place which is more convenient for his career, it is the wife who is expected to move to the place of her husband's work at the cost of her own career to support him. In times of family emergencies, it is most likely for the wife to take time off her job. Left to devote desirable attention to their profession or occupation, they would achieve great success in their work. But they always suffer from the conflicts brought about by their role as a wife and a mother. If women give quite a bit of attention and time to their duties at home, then they have the tension and conflict of having neglected their profession. In short, a woman feels torn between her duties towards her profession and towards her home.

Another problem, which a working woman faces, is contradiction in her performance and expectations while at work and at home. The working women are therefore found most confused regarding their 'actual' and 'expected' roles both at home and at work. While, on one hand, they are expected in employment to be assertive, independent, self-confident and clever to carry out efficiently and successfully their jobs, they are expected on the other hand not to show their independence, self-assertion or confidence while carrying out traditional role of a daughter or a wife. They are expected to be shy, submissive and dependent. This is likely to cause acute conflicts because fulfilment of the two objectives requires performances of different types. This contradiction in roles and goals makes a woman tense and thus creates problems for her both in her job as also at home. As a result she is under a great mental strain.

A pertinent question arises as to how can the status and role of a working woman be improved ?

A woman's role in building a happy family is no doubt extremely vital. At the same time her role in the economic progress and development of the society is no less important. A happy family as also a healthy society requires powerful women to be utilized, shoulder to shoulder with men. This is possible only if women are treated with respect and their potentialities are channelized in proper direction. This will help in raising her status in the society.

Equal status for women can be achieved only when there is a change in the minds and attitudes of men, women and society, as a whole, towards women, particularly, the working women. The most urgent need is to promote fresh mental approach by means of making community, as a whole, more widely informed about the demographic, technical and cultural happenings, as well as, about the changing life patterns and attitudes, particularly of women. They should be made to understand that equality of rights between men and women, also implies equality of privileges as concerns the development of any individual. All that is demanded of society and its male-oriented institutions is that they stop regarding her an inferior-being and treat her as an equal.

"If I were born a woman, I would rise in rebellion against any pretension on the part of man that woman is born to be his plaything" so said the father of our nation, Mahatma Gandhi. A considerable revolution has taken place during last three decades in giving recognition to the role a woman is able to play in all fields which concern our society and civilisation. One can hope by the end of this century this process will become consolidated and woman's lot especially that of Kashmiri origin, would improve not only in terms of her equality & importance with male partner in matters of employment and responsibilities towards children & household but also in respect of her contributions towards society. It is expected that her conflicts and contradictions will be lessened so also her tensions presently created by a feeling of inferiority complex and the crises of change that has emerged as a result of her switching over to tasks other than those pertaining to household. The coming two decades should fulfil the dream of having a society in which men and women are equal partners, devoid of any psychological barriers amongst themselves.

Growth of Various Forms in Kashmiri Literature

by

Kumar Jee Raina

Epics :

The classical *Mahabharata* was probably rendered into Kashmiri during Sultan Zain-ul-Abideen's time ; the mutilated manuscript in the Research Department is perhaps its only extant copy. Its translator is nowhere traceable in the text, and its diction is mostly outdated.

After the downfall of the *Shahmiri* and *Chak* dynasties, literary interest in epics continued declining, till Prakash Koul of Kulgam retold *Ramayana* in Kashmiri probably in 1847 A. D. There were other abridged versions of *Ramayana*, the latest one being Nila Kanth Sharma's in the current century. From amongst the 19th century epic-poets, Moulvi Siddiquil-lah of Hajin gave us the first version of Nizami's famous, *Sikendernama*. Hamidullah of Anantnag is the only Kashmiri poet in the 19th Century who wrote his *Akbarnama*. Later Wahhab retold Firdousi's entire *Shahnama* and *Khilafatnama*. Lachman Koul Bulbul's abbreviated *Shahnama* is pure in diction, but not superior in content to Amir Shah's. Amir Shah's note worthy epics is *Khawarnama* on the military exploits of the fourth Orthodox Caliph, Hazrat e-Ali. He was followed by Muzaffar Shah who wrote *Jang-e-Mukhtar* depicting the horrible vengeance wrought on Ummayed troops who were reported to have murdered Imam-e-Hussain, the martyr. By this time, almost all Arab battles fought and won during the time of the Prophet Mohammad and his Caliphs, were rendered into Kashmiri verse.

The influence of Persian often creeps in intensely in subjective moods that sublimate into romantic flashes first under a veiled and allegorical sensuousness and later into sublime ejaculations. Habbal Khatoon, Rasool Mir and Mahjoor respectively stand

as mile—stones in the romantic poetry of 16th, 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. To them everything in the romantic environment of Kashmir, particularly flower, meadow glen glade and even a thistle appeared both bewildering and soothing. This tradition was carried further by Wahhab in Ghazals and by Haquani, Haji Miskeen and Lassa Khan in their Bazmia (love). *Gulrez*, *Gulnoor*, *Rana-Zeba*, *Sherin-Khusroo*, *Gul-e Bakawuli*, even though only Kashmiri versions of foreign romantic works do come upto standard regarding diction, plot and pitch in the style.

Lyrics :

Lyrics originally meant something pertaining to lyre *i. e* to sing ; later it came to mean a poem divided into stanzas and directly expressing the poet's thoughts or sentiments. In Kashmiri we have 'Lol lyrics' a phrase coined by Prof. J. L. Koul. Lol implying an untranslatable complex of love, longing and tugging at the heart. Habba-Khatoon initiated its form '*Watsun*'. All songs such as *Chakri*, *Rov* and *Lila* songs adopted '*Watsun*' as its form. We owe its preservation to the professional singers of Sufiana Kalam (mystic poetry).

Folk Songs :

It is usually intensely subjective ; its forms are varied and simple mostly a four line stanza with a refrain intended to suit numerous situations in life, e. g. to supplicate spiritual patronage for the baby, cheer up a naughty youngster lighten the burden of a house wife, a toiling worker or a coolie dragging on a loaded cart. The five commendable volumes of Kashmiri *Luka-Bath* one compiled jointly by Naji and Saqi and other by Saqi alone, comprise the best specimen of almost all off shoots of folk songs.

The two forms are perhaps the oldest forms of the folk song exclusively 'reserved for the fair sex'. "Vanvun" is a must for all ceremonies, such as on marriages, Id, Shivratri and in the month of Ramzan etc. Vanvun is always lighter in the tune, varied in form and centred round a particular occasion as for instance 'heralding a prosperous future for the baby'; while 'Rov' has its own peculiarities. Prof. Koul has graphically depicted it when he wrote; the country lassies and the middle aged dames come out after sun set, divide themselves into two interlocked rows. Their arms over one another's shoulders and begin the swing like movement of the whole file, one row advancing and the other receding, both keeping tunes to the dance tune of the Rov. These songs have relieved the tedium of life of the illiterate women-folk, who find in them a sincere echo of their emotions.

In Rov alone the fair sex get a free chance to ejaculate their inner urges and suppressed aspirations.

Dastan Shayeri :

A number of long classical tales are interwoven in songs appropriate to the various situations in the plot; these songs from a distinct genre called Dastan-Shayeri. Some of the tales are purely native such as *Akanandun*, *Jehaar* and *Habba-Kharoon*, while some others are of foreign origin e.g. '*Laila Majnoon*', '*Haroon Rasheed*', *Gul'-e-Sonaber* etc. Except Kabir Mir's Zen-e-Mazoor (wood cutter) all the pieces are anonymous and at the mercy of the professional reciter (Kathagor) whose love for the old and even obsolete idiom and vocables can well be illustrated by one example of Mohammad Khaar of Shahgund, who could at the age of about ninety recite 150 verses of Bhadur Ganai's *Akanandun* transmitted traditionally more than 300 years back. In view of the diminishing number of narrators, there is every apprehension of the loss of major portion of this 'poetry' unless arrangements are made for its proper compilation.

Devotional poetry :

Lal Ded and Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani are the first two Kashmiri poets whose major part of poetry falls under this form; of course with one difference; Lal Ded basing her poetry on Shavite faith, and Nund Reshi on Islamic ethics. In entire gamut, we notice

one major difference; non-Muslim poets using over sanskritised and Muslims over-persianized diction of style. From Sahab Koul to Krishna Razdan on the one hand and from Habibullah Nowsheri to Haquani on the other hand, a long chain of poets have followed this trait. There are, however some exceptions. Some Muslim poets like Rahim Sahib, Shamas Faqir writing in the style of Shastra, and Hindu poets like Sat Ram and Anand Koul singing eulogies to the Holy Prophet. Their attempts do indicate the spirit of reverence for faiths other than ones own.

Devotional poetry has branched into numerous fields, hymns (Munajaat) to God, eulogies (*naat*) to the Prophet. Panegyrics (*Manaquabat*) to saints in the Muslim group, and 'lilas' 'Bhajans' and reformatory poems in the Hindu group. Muslims derive their material from the Holy Quran, traditions of the Prophet, Islamic history, theology and mysticism; Hindus basing their verse on mythology, Bhagvat Geeta, Puranas, Krishana Bhakti, Rama Bhakti and Trika Shastra.

Taayis, Sona-Ullah Kreri & Nadim, have utilized almost their entire crudition to *Naat* and *Munajaat*; Lakhmanjoo Bulbul and Krishana Razdan wrote 'Lilas' 'Bhajans' and reformation poems. Several others who have contributed a lot include Molvi Siddiqullah, Hassan Shah, and Haquani, Prakash Ram, Parmanand and Nil Kenth Sharma. Shamas-ud-Din Ghamgeen, Fitrat. G. R. Nazki, Fazil in general and Ghulam Mushtaq and Arshique Zakhmi have produced excellent pieces in religious verse during the past two decades.

Humour :

Even though Kashmiri literature is deficient in humour when compared to other languages, its scattered stock is not hallow in content nor immature in spirit. *Ladishah* is entertaining to country folk and *Bandjashan* provide open air theatrical performance. A Kashmiri is justly noted for his ready wit. Retort pun and play upon words, come naturally to his tongue. Maqbool Shah had given a start but latter poets added a lot to humorous verse. Pahalnama, Muqdam-Nama, Malnama etc. Madha Deek of Srinagar in quatrains and Wahhab Sahib of Sangrama

in long poems spouted forth venomous lampoon streaked with humour.

The first weekly paper 'Guash' and latter G. N. Khayal's weekly 'Wattan' had reserved a column for humour, while Noor Mohammad Bookseller published the *Asun-ta-Gindun* and *Dilsoza* immature but humorous skits before the fifties.

Shahr Ashobe :

When a Kashmiri took to new fashions that misplaced him in society, or to new values repugnant to the common belief, the poet came with his satire in *Shahr Ashobe*. This genre includes satire on corrupt officials, bsmboozling priests or even on natural calamities. Nadim, Wahhab and others have left behind some serious pieces centring round either humorous caricaturing or stinging lampoon.

Ladishah :

It is the typical name for a folk ballad pungently comic-cum-satiric in text, and historically speaking a sullen reaction of a suppression and tyranny. It is distinguished for its homely metaphor, and picturesque portrayal of ridiculous situation which a common Kashmiri faced during autocratic rule and it has proved to be a source of mental consolation for the enslaved folk during the centuries past. Major portion of this form is lost in verbal transmission by the illiterate bards, nevertheless we still possess some very fine pieces in the *Ladishah*. Hakeem Habibullah, Munawar Shah and Lala Lakhmen are re-cognized masters of this form.

Prose :

Prose writing has systematically begun from 1974 onwards when most of the intellectuals and men of letters collectively felt an urge to enrich Kashmiri not only in pure literature alone but in work of technical subjects as well. Various organisations sprang up to coordinate the literary out put in prose in their official journals, but the journals proved too limited for literary works of note. Nor was there any regular agency prepared to undertake publications of books. With this environment, not even a quarter of what has been written has been printed and even a considerable part of what has been printed, is to be gleaned from the pages of magazines.

It was only in the late fifties that the State Cultural Academy and to some extent the Sahitya Akademi (Delhi) came to the rescue of local writers. The individual maiden attempts in prose during the past two decades proved outstanding enough to win over the Sahitya Akademi and Cultural Academy awards.

It appears surprising how within a short period Kashmiri prose branched off to dry fields with full exuberance e. g. Sargam on musical notations by S. Abdul Aziz. On the one hand, the basic book on Physical Science for laymen, such as *Wusta-Prang* by Prof. Sadhu gave a fillip to the budding writers in the technical subjects, while on the other travelogues like *Cheenok Safar* by Mirza Arif opened up new vistas for widening the scope of prose.

Novel :

It must be frankly admitted that Kashmiri is deficient in novels : only two novels, Akthar's *Dog Dag* and Gauhars *Mujrim* can be adjudged as coming upto the mark. The notable translation of foreign novels include George Gorky's 'Mother' by A. M. Lone, Prem Chands 'Gaudhan' by Roshan and Tagores *Chokher Beli* by Prof. P. N. Pushp.

Like novels, the novelette also is in its infancy-stage. Journals, *Soun Abad*, *Sheeraza*, *Koshur Adab* and *Nayub* have recently begun drawing writers towards this branch of prose, though in effect they appear better in essays than in the novelette.

Drama :

Drama in Kashmiri had touched a high pitch in Sultan Zain-ul-Aabideen's time when Bhodah Bhatt wrote his *Zaina Villasa*, and stage plays enjoyed royal patronage. Srivara reports in his *Zain-Trangni* that an actress singer could depict 49 emotions in her dancing as harmoniously as the musical cadence demanded. Sultan Hassan Shah surpassed all his predecessors in synthesizing the local fine arts with those of the Iranian and Indian prototypes. Drama, as a distinct branch of literature, though mostly preserved in verbal transmission, continued flourishing till the fall of Chak dynasty. With the advent of foreign rule, decline in all forms of Kashmiri literature was quite an expected misfortune ; consequently the folk-taste had

to survive through the professional bards, who in their turn reduced the stage drama to a clumsy performance in the open field. The Banda-Jashan became a sort of open air village folk-theatre managed by professional players depicting social ills and bureaucratic tyranny rarely alluding to some historic theme such as Davza-Pather. This degraded practice continued till the present century, when Nand Lali Koul wrote *satech kahawat* and three other less known plays *Ramun Raj Paz-Pativarata* and *Dayun Lol*. These were over-sanskritised in diction. After him, Tara Chand Trissal wrote plays 'Aknandun' 'Ramavtar' and 'Premech Kahawat' and other minor Pazech Kahawat with the same mental background as that of Nand Lal. but in simpler diction till Mohi-uddin Hajadi, while a college student wrote his "Grees-sund Ghara" (the peasants home).

In 1947 Kashmir became the war zone and the state was actually partitioned. Kashmiri writers also fell into two camps separated by the detested cease-fire line. The radio Dramas in the two regions of Kashmir were first converged on the exigencies of propaganda rather than on canon of art. 'Kune Kath' type of plays in Kashmiri fall under this category. However, the young playwrights asserted themselves and began writing seriously.

D. N. Nadim's 'Neki-ta-Badi' (Good and Evil) Kamil's 'Habba-Khatoon' Wali's 'Zoon'. Akthar's 'Naste-Hynd Swal' are some of the first attempts during the fifties. The two operas-Nadim's 'Bomber-ta-Yamberzal' and Kamil's 'Bomber-ta-Lolar, are in fact the finest pieces in the form. The Academy of Art Culture and Languages has since 1958. been organising play competitions every year and awarding prizes for play writing Production, acting and also staging the

prize winning plays in the Tagore Hall. 'Yiti Chhu Banan' (This too happens) by M. S. Butt 'Research' by Pushkar Bhan and Soom Nath Sadhu, 'Taqdeer' by Mohmmad Subhan Bhaget, 'Taqudeer Saaz' by Ali Mohmmad Lone. 'Hawas' by M. L. Kemu have successfully been staged in the Hall.

There are now number of classical dramas translated into Kashmiri under the direction of the Sahita Akademi Dehli—Tagore's 'Mukta Dhara' by A. M. Lone, "Sontuk Abgath" by Mirza Arif wild duck Thuj) by Soom Nath Zutshi. Independent attempts to translate foreign plays are also worth mention. Shakespear's Othello by Nadim, and Julius Ceasor by Naji Munawar, She Starts to Conquer by A. K. Rehbar are besides some of the additions to our dramatic literature. Despite the technical drawbacks a number of plays staged by the Bhagat Theatre Akingam (under the direction of M. L. Kemu) and the hero Machama and Waktuk Lukman by Pushkar Bhan have been presented well on the stage. Prof. S. L. Sadhu's 'Birbal' is historical play, the first attempt in the form, but neither sublime in theme nor viable in style.

Though there is a long tradition in almost all higher educational institutions to stage plays written in Urdu or Hindi and occasionally in Kashmiri and though we have a number of playwrights engaged in writing one act plays, Skits and shadow plays, it must be admitted that 'most of these make a contribution more than to drama' and that is why the plays staged by various dramatic Clubs before, 1947. remained confined to social reform or local mythology, and could not raise the level to the artistic standards. It is only after 1960, that we find the balance gradually turning in favour of maturity in thoughts and eloquence, freefulness and economy in diction.



Kashmir ; The Legend & Scientific Facts

by

A. N. Fotidar

In this paper something is being told about the land, which is usually not available to the general public. It is usual, or even customary, to write about the historical backdrop of the land, especially that relating to the people, their culture, arts, religion etc. But there is another aspect—and a fascinating one at that relating to the geomorphology of this land of which even a brief recital would, I believe, be interesting to the general readers. Most of us of the old vintage are aware of the legend—or call it myth, if you so like—regarding the origin of Kashmir, which was passed on through oral tradition via the grand mother's tales. However, the younger generation now does not appear to be aware of it.

The source books of such tales are the *Nilmata Purana* and the *Rajtaranginis*. These reveal that the present day valley of Kashmir was a lake named *Sati-Saras* which was inhabited by demons, Yakhshas and Naga tribes, who were snake worshipers. The chief of the demons was *Jalodabhava*, who interfered with the lives of everyone and caused untold troubles. To meet the situation and live peaceful lives, the residents invoked the assistance and blessings of the deities to destroy these demons. This was accomplished. Subsequently Kashyapa, a brahmin sage, drained the waters of this lake by making an opening in the gorge at Khadanyar near Varahmul, the present day Baramulla, through which the water of the lake was drained off and the land became habitable and fit for agriculture. This in essence is the legend relating to the origin of the land which has been called Kashmir, after the name of the rishi, Kashyapa, who reclaimed it as stated above. Whatever the basis for the legend, in essence however, it indicates the course of events which have found a strong basis in science.

It is generally believed that after formation of

the earth aeons ago, parts of it started drifting apart to form definite land masses, known as continents (Taylor—Wagner hypothesis of continental drift). Among other phenomena associated with this drift, has been the movement of the southern land mass to the north, which were separated by the Tethys sea. The collision of these two masses resulted in the rise of the Himalayas along their points of contact. It is for this that this range of mountains is taken to be the youngest in the world. Further, as the force of the resultant collision has not fully been neutralised, this mountain range is still rising.

A look at the map of India will show that Kashmir in the west and Assam in the east, are the two promontories which must have been the first points of contact for these land masses and therefore assume importance for providing the necessary scientific evidence to prove the validity or otherwise of the hypothesis indicated earlier. Restricting our remarks to the valley of Kashmir some indisputable evidence has come to light in support of this hypothesis of the continental drift. It would, however, lengthen this paper unduly with a large amount of scientific names and data, if it is discussed in some detail. Moreover it would not serve much purpose for the general reader. Therefore reference will only be made to important points.

Briefly stated, remains or fossils of a large number of sea animals found in various old rock formations, clearly suggest that these came from a marine habitat provided by the Tethys sea. Similarly a variety of plant fossils show an intermingling of the characteristic ancient floras of the southern and the northern land masses. Many interesting finds of great scientific value have been made with the help of which the entire sequence of these phenomena have been built up.

Subsequent to the formation of the continental land masses and uplift of the Himalayan range, there have been further cataclysmic changes in geological time which have resulted in the uplift and formation of the Pir Punjal range of mountains in the south of the valley. Along with this uplift, the lacustrine deposits of the Karewa lake—a body of fresh water trapped between the main outer Himalayan range in the north and the Pir Punjal range in the south—were dragged up the northern face of the Pir Punjal range. This has been proved beyond any doubt by the discovery of remains of many water plants, e.g. *Trapa Sp.* (Singhara) at heights of over 3000 meters a.s.l. This process was further complicated by at least three glacial advances with four interglacial periods. The present time falls in the fourth interglacial period. It was in this period that man appeared on the scene, just "as an interlude", to quote the late Prof. B. Sahni.

Without going into any further scientific evidence in support of the above statement it may, however, be stated here that, besides the much older geological rock formations, during the recent geological time there have been sedimentary deposits of lacustrine origin comprising glacial clays, called the upper and the lower Karewas. At several exposed sites these bear remains of tropical and subtropical plant species which are not found in the valley at the present time. Their occurrence in, what is called early pleistocene period, proves beyond any shadow of doubt that with the uplift—or several uplifts—of the Pir Punjal range of mountains, there have been concomitant changes in the climate from tropical to subtropical and finally to the temperate and alpine as prevailing to day. A mass of evidence, based on extensive field and laboratory studies, has been collected in support of the above statement.

One of the impacts of this process has been that the existing soils in the valley are considered still to be immature and consequently the present day vegetation is still in the process of being evolved to, what is called, the climatic climax vegetation. However, this natural process is greatly being interfered with by biotic, but mostly human, interference.

When did man actually appear on the scene in this phantasmagoria, there is still no final agreement. A lot of evidence has been collected and lot more remains to be done. However, a recent study has shown that some sort of agriculture was followed in south west of the valley, some 5 to 10 thousand years ago and maize was one of the crops grown. The recent excavations at Burzahom—a site which was first identified by De Terra and Patterson in early thirties as one of the megalithic sites—have revealed that it was more than 5 thousand years ago that man lived in this locality. At first he lived in pits, sustained by hunting with stone and bone implements. Then he passed through several stages of development which included some sort of early crop and animal husbandary, etc. The social and cultural development of the man occupying this site have variously been related to China, Korea as also to similar sites elsewhere in the country. The said excavations at Burzahom are located on high ground overlooking the Dal Lake. Besides animal remains, the plant remains in the form of charcoal, have been identified as pine and birch and agriculture crops suggest some millets.

A lot of ground remains still to be covered to build up the subsequent development following this Burzahom culture. For the time being we have to depend more or less on mythology till we come to the recorded history as revealed in the Rajtarangnis. In these also we have to take as mere mythology the earlier portions which cover quite a few thousand years. This is so as the time scale worked out appears to be based on presumption rather than on any firm historical and scientific evidence. However, whatever be the basis of recording and even following the *Saptarishi* era (5056 years) in our almanac, it suggests a remarkably near enough approach to the era of the discovery of early man when he emerged as a pit dweller following a some sort of social and cultural order. This may be a mere coincidence or even a conjecture, as further discoveries may relegate the era of social man's appearance on the scene still farther back. All the same an almost virgin field is there to explore, which definitely would yield extremely interesting results.

Perspective of Land Reforms in Jammu & Kashmir

by

Miss Meenakshi Moza, New Delhi

The question of land reforms has assumed a crucial significance in all the developing countries of the world as a pre-requisite and as an essential element of economic growth in general and of agricultural development in particular. It should be recognized that land reforms constitute a multi-dimensional change involving among others political, economic, and social aspects. Land reform by itself may not usher in an era of social equality. But it is certainly one of the important instruments of bringing about such a transformation of society, especially in a developing country, the main-stay of whose economy is agriculture. Since agriculture is the pivot of developing economy and land is the most important means of production in agriculture, the struggle between the various classes in a society has mainly revolved round the question of ownership of land. This fight for land between clans, tribes or nations and within them, between land owners and landless "formed the life of the peoples and determined the pattern of society". [E. H. Jacoby : 1971]

In India, which is predominantly an agricultural country, the problems of land reforms has naturally been one of the most important items on the political agenda as well as for political agitation and economic struggle. There has been an immense and unprecedented wave of land reforms in India since the coming of independence in 1947. The Central Government, from time to time, advocated certain land reform measures of limited nature through the Five Year National Plans, beginning with the First Five Year Plan 1952-57. The main objective of these measures being to benefit the bulk of agricultural population as well as to promote social justice for the rural masses. However, barring a few states, these measures have achieved little success and remained, to a very large extent, confined to the statute book.

Among all the states of the Indian Union, Jammu and Kashmir State has the unique distinction of having introduced land reform legislation of considerable magnitude and thus, earned the name of Agrarian Revolution. In fact, as early as 1944, in the *New Kashmir* manifesto, we find articulation of the basic principles of land reforms and of other radical measures. It mentions about the abolition of intermediary agencies of exploitation and landlordism and affirms the principle of land to the tiller and proposes other radical measures. Jammu and Kashmir is one of the least developed states of India. Its strategic and geographic location, climatic conditions, physical features and demographic distribution make it distinct from other states in the country. But like other States, it is basically dependent on agriculture and allied activities for the livelihood of its people and exhibits all the characteristic features of an under developed economy. According to the estimates made by National Council of Applied Economic Research (NEAR), the 'State's economy is heavily reliant on agriculture and allied fields, these account for sixty-one percent of the State's income as compared to fifty-two percent in case of the entire country.' [Techno-Economic survey of J. & K. 1969] Agriculture thus being the largest industry in the State, occupies a place of primacy in the State's economy. It provides employment to 9.32 lakh persons, accounting for 67-8 percent of the total working force in the State (Statistical Digest of J & K, 1973-74) According to 1971 census the proportion of rural to urban population stood at 81.41 percent which is more than the All India average of 80.10 percent [Report of Agricultural census; 1971]. The prosperity and welfare of the State, therefore, lies in the well-being of the tillers of the soil, which in turn depends on the method of utilization of agricultural resources and the quantum of rights possessed in land.

Historical Background

In order to comprehend the present position of the tillers, it is pertinent to review the agrarian structure as it had evolved during the pre-independence era. As a matter of fact, the land system in the State owed its genesis to practices inherited from the successive alien regimes which ruled for centuries by conquest, through the use of brutal force or by deceit or a reward from the retaining potentates over the State. In order to establish themselves in the foreign land, the victor monarchs created a class of feudad landlords who helped them in subjugating and exploiting the masses. Sir Francis Young Husband, in referring to these feudal lords, pointed out that they were really no landlords of the type dealing with cultivation of land but a class of political dissentities who, due to weak Governments, had in a bid for power amongst the successive rulers of the time, built their own strongholds and, living on the labour of the poor tillers, got themselves installed as landed aristocrats. [Francis E. Young Husband : 1973]. The feudal lords not only acted as agents of the rulers but also their collectors. As intermediaries, they always vied with one another in proving their loyalty to the crown. In the process the poor peasant—the cultivator suffered impoverishment and was reduced to abject penury, which, paradoxically benefited the ruling class who came forward ostensibly for rendering help, but really to act as a creditor, either as a money lender or a mortgage. It was thus, a vicious and unending process. Rulers would come and go but to the peasant and the cultivator the whole process seemed unchanging and eternal.

Thus, the agrarian system before the introduction of Lawrence's Land Settlement in 1889, was feudal in character and exploitative in nature. Mr. A. Wingate, who preceded Sir Walter Lawrence, as the First Settlement Commissioner, described the land system as "ryotwari in ruins". He conducted the first settlement in 1887 in the tehsilts of Lal and Phak and felt the necessity of liberating the agriculturist from the chains of slavery and misery. However, Mr. Wingate's tenure in the valley was short-lived and in April 1889, the work was entrusted to W. R. Lawrence, a very competent and efficient Settlement officer. He introduced some far-reaching reforms in the land tenure and tenancy relationships. Mr. Lawrence

found the condition of the peasantry in the State quite deplorable, the settlement work appeared to him not only enormous but he had also to face a powerful opposition of the official class and the city elite. The peasants were literally crushed under the burden of taxes. Mr. Lawrence records that when he started settlement of the land, everything save air and water, was under taxation (W. R. Lawrence ;1967) He therefore, tried to win the confidence of the cultivators. He persisted and completed the work in the valley.

A notable feature of the settlement was the assessment work. Variations in the soil, fertility, climatic conditions, irrigation etc. made unrealistic to impose a uniform rate over all areas. All such factors were taken into consideration and, on such basis, the entire area was divided into assessment circles. In each assessment, estimate of average produce (chakla rates) were obtained by conducting crop cutting experiments for different crops. Another important feature of the settlement was the conferment of occupaney rights on the cultivators in undisputed lands. They were named as *Assamis*. [*Assami* is a word of old standing in Kashmir. It may be defined as a man recognized by the state as lawful occupant of land, and in the Mughal times and thereafter, from the point of view of the state, the status of *Assami* in theory meant nothing more than a tenant at will). Those who accepted the assessment were granted permanent and hereditary rights but these rights were not alienable either by sale or mortgage or otherwise. Similarly payment of land revenue in cash was substituted for payment in kind. *Begar* or forced labour in its more objectionable form was abolished.

Although, Lawrence's Land Settlement gave a lot of relief to the peasantry, yet it created some other problems for them. The settlement created a class of intermediaries between the State and the actual tillers. These intermediaries were called *Assamidars*. The right of *assamidar* was heritable but he was not a full owner as he could not sell or mortgage the land without the permission of His Highness. The condition of the peasantry in the valley of Kashmir during all these years thus, remained deplorable. Maharaja Hari Singh, despite his liberal predilection, had not been able to alleviate the sufferings of his subjects, while

he was placating and fostering the interests of his clan and a large body of courtiers by grant of big chunks of land as Jagirs. There was no attempt at remodelling the agrarian economy which, being inherently based on a feudal land system, presented a remarkable uniform picture of inefficiency, low productivity and stagnation. The condition of peasants and cultivators was sad and deplorable. Despite the expiry of two hundred years of British rule and hundred years of Dogra rule, these 'wretched' people remained as 'dumb-driven cattle,' an epithet used by some leaders to describe their condition.

Introduction of Land Reforms.

In order to give the cultivator an equal and rightful place in the social order, to stop his exploitation, it was thought necessary to bring the tillers of the soil in direct relationship with the state, abolish the intermediary interests in land and remove the disparities in the quantum of land owned by the individuals. Aply, therefore, a frontal attack was made on the State's feudal land system which had sucked the blood of the cultivators and deprived them of their personality and reduced them to abject destitution. Obviously radical measures were needed to deal with social and economic malaise which has seized the state.

The land reform legislation of the state may be divided into two phases—(a) reforms introduced in late forties and early fifties ; (b) reforms introduced in seventies. The first phase of land reforms commenced with effect from 1948 when the popular Government, which came into power in March 1948, headed by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah as Prime Minister and Mirza Afzal Beg as Revenue Minister took steps to redeem their promised pledges and make the peasantry free-from the shackles of slavery and suffering. The first step in this direction was taken in April 1948, when the Government enacted legislation to remove the burden of parasitic hierarchy of *Jagirdars*, *Muafidars* and *Mukarraries*, feudal system which was in force in the state for over a century, from the back of the peasantry. As a result of this enactment, 396 *Jagirdars* and *Mufaidas* and 2,347 *Mukarraries* disappeared from the rural scene. [Mirza Afzal Beg : 1950]. That the elimination of the Jagirdars and similar right holders in land was only the first step in new land policy, became evident in October 1948

when the Government initiated the second step by amending the state Tenancy Act of 1924. The cultivating tenant, as a class, were clothed with the rights of protected-tenants.

Having abolished the *Jagirs* and *Muafis* and granted security of tenure to the peasants, the Government appointed a 'Land to the Tiller Committee' in 1949 to look into the problems of peasantry. To further alleviate the distress of the poverty stricken people of the state, the Government at the sametime considered thoughtfully on the chronic problem of indebtedness. The Kashmiri peasant, like other peasants in India, was 'born in debt, lived in debt and died in debt.' According to official estimates rural debts amounted to Rs. 310 lakhs and urban debts to Rs. 56 lakhs which meant a per capita average of forty-eight rupees. (J & K Govt ; Towards Solvency ; 1952) In February 1950, the Government, therefore, issued an ordinance delaying for six months the realisation of all debts, a process that finally culminated in far-reaching measure known as 'Distressed Debtors' Relief Act. This relieved the peasants of the burden of their accumulated debts.

On the 13 July 1950, the nineteenth anniversary of the Martyrs' Day, the Government made the historic decision of transferring land to the tiller and on 17th October 1950, the Constituent Assembly passed the Big Landed Estates Abolition Act. This Act has revolutionized the whole fabric of rural economy and was rightly acclaimed by peasants as being their *Magnacarta*. Under the Act, proprietors retained only 223/4 acres (182 Kanals) of land besides orchards, grass farms and fuel services and the right of ownership of land in excess of this limit was extinguished and transferred to the tillers to the extent of their actual cultivating possession during Kharif 2007 (September-October 1950). On the most important question of compensation, the Act provided that the Legislative Assembly of the state should resolve it at a future date and this body held that lands would be taken away without any payment of compensation. This provision was a unique one as everywhere in India, compensation was paid to the landholders.

The second phase of land reforms was introduced in 1970s. While it cannot be denied that the reforms

of 1950s benefited a large number of tillers of the soil, however, it will not be correct to state that no anomalies, lacunae, inequities and inconsistencies were created as a result of these reforms. These reforms, because of certain loopholes in them, caused dissatisfaction among those landlords whose landholding exceeds the ceiling limit. In order to pacify the grievances of such landlords, the Government appointed Wazir Committee headed by Justice Janki Nath Wazir, the then Chief Justice of the state in 1953. The Committee, after inquiry, offered a number of recommendations to overcome these inconsistencies in the legislation. However, no action was taken by the Government to give these recommendations a practical shape. Then in March 1963, the Government constituted a land commission under the chairmanship of the then Revenue Minister, Syed Mir Qasim. The terms of reference of the Land commission were, among other things, to examine the gaps in the existing laws the Commission submitted its report in 1968. One of the most important recommendations of the commission was that the system of landlord tenant relationship in the State's agrarian economy should be replaced by the institution of peasant proprietorship of land.

The Government considered the report of the commission and taking into consideration the total impact of the agrarian reforms in the country passed another legislation known as Agrarian Reforms Act of 1972. With the formulation of this measure, the system of landlord-tenant relationship, wherever it existed, came to an end, in as much as the latter held in ownership within the prescribed ceiling of $12\frac{1}{2}$ standard acres. The Act also curtailed considerably the exempted categories of land. Areas known as *Kah-i-Krisham*, bedzars, and other fuel and fodder growing areas were removed from the category of exempted lands, and could now be held along with other types of land only upto the ceiling area of $12\frac{1}{2}$ standard acres. The 1972 Act also adversely affected the orchards. Orchards were put into two categories ; a) old orchards as were already existing in kharif 1971 and (b) new orchards. As far as new orchards were concerned, they were kept in the ceiling. The old orchards could be held in excess of the ceiling but if a family could own an old orchard which was less than $12\frac{1}{2}$ standard acres, it could own only so much of other kind of land which along with the orchard

added upto $12\frac{1}{2}$ acres and if a family happened to have more than ceiling, it would have to pay a tax up to Rs 800 per standard acre, besides land revenue. This was indeed a revolutionary measure, as per the time, the Government endeavoured to curb the proprietors of big orchards.

In 1975 the National Conference came into power again. The first major task of the Government, soon after taking over administration, was to suspend the operation of this legislation. A seven-member committee was appointed to recast and reshape the State's Agrarian Reforms Act of 1972. The committee drafted a Bill which was finally enacted as the Jammu and Kashmir Agrarian Reforms Act of 1976. However, the Act could not be implemented due to some technical difficulties. Accordingly, when the present Government returned to power in July 1977, it picked up the threads again by proposing some amendments in the Act. Finally, the Jammu and Kashmir Agrarian Reforms (Amendment) Act was passed which came into force on 13th July 1978. The most striking provision of the present Act is that landlordism has been completely abolished and land has been given to the tiller who actually cultivates it. Orchards have been again excluded from the application of the ceiling built of 12.5 standard acres. Another important feature of the Act is that unlike the Act of 1950, it does provide for the payment of reasonable amount of compensation to those whose rights got extinguished.

Land Reforms : An Estimate

The distinction of enforcing land reforms with an element of expropriation, not found in the rest of the Indian Union, goes to Jammu and Kashmir State. It is difficult, however, to assess the working of such reforms or to draw up a comprehensive programme for rural economic development without knowing who owns land, who works on it, in what quantities and under what terms. The reforms were aimed at liberating the peasant from the fetters of complete economic dependence on the feudal landlord, but, in practice, however, it could not fulfil its intended objective i. e. to satisfy the land hunger of the land-poor and landless agricultural population. Viewed in this context the impact of land reforms has fallen far short of expectations. It may be pointed out here that

there are two models of land reforms ; One is the obliteration of proprietary rights in land in the interests of the whole of the peasantry with complete elimination of the landlord class'. (Grigory Kolovsky : 1964). This model has been adopted in the countries like people's Republic of China, Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Korean People's Democratic Republic and East European Democracies, etc. The second model of land reforms is carrying out a 'bourgeoisie landlord agrarian reforms' *ibid*). In this model, the aim of land reforms can never be achieved fully. By adopting this model, the semi feudal land holding is restricted and is then gradually transformed into capitalist land-holding. This results in strengthening of the strata of a new class called the "rich peasantry" and the interests of national bourgeoisie. In Jammu and Kashmir State, by and large, the second model has been adopted.

It may be said, in passing, that anything that happens under bourgeois auspices can never fully achieve its aim. The ruling class has always to compromise with the existing set up. It would be right to state as Callingwood remarked that in every historical situation there are two questions to be asked—'the first what did they think they were doing and second, what did they really do? The answers of the two are not identical. What they thought they were doing can best be illustrated by such phrases as 'the abolition of landlordisms' or 'land to the tiller programme. etc. However, these need a thorough scrutiny and examination as they are adopted as 'convenient summaries of various underlying aims and pressures,' [Doreen Hammer 1968) which can best be understood by reference to the political situation of the Government at that time. What they have actually done can be ascertained by the mode of implementation of these reforms. Even an ideal legislation is likely to remain a dead letter if it is not effectively implemented and enforced. It is the process and mode of implementation alone which can determine the actual impact of the reform (H. C. Tai 1974).

The nationalist leaders of the State, time and again, have been making use of such slogans as 'land to the tiller' and advocating that political freedom is not enough to make it durable and effective means of peace and progress in a country. it must be founded

on socio-economic freedom. The tiller of the soil, the Kisan and the skilled and unskilled worker, the landless agricultural labour and other neglected sections of the state they argued would be given a fair deal. It will be examined here as how far they have been successful in implementing these slogans.

On examining the implementation of land reforms in the state, it can be said that it was made faulty and ineffective due to two factors. namely. (a) the same old bureaucracy was in-charge of their implementation and (b) there were various loopholes and flaws in the legislation itself, passed from time to time which gave ample opportunities to those who could manipulate the law, The defective legislation and its ineffective implementation has led to the frustration and disappointment of the small-holders, share-croppers, and landless people on the one hand, and on the other enabled the well to do section of land holders to evade law.

The legislation enacted in 1950s may be regarded, to a large extent radical and revolutionary in comparison to the reforms introduced in 1970s. The legislation in the first phase completely overhauled the position of the peasant class, who were under the bondage and terrified of mentioning their afflictions to them. The new Act of 1978. it may be remarked, is in no way an improvement upon the earlier legislation and, in fact, some of its provisions are more retrograde than even the Act of 1972. It is an ambiguous and vague Act, offering a number of concessions to the vested interests who have grown after 1947. The National Conference, like any petty *bourgeoisie* leadership cannot harm its own interests and that of its supporters without salvaging as much as it can in the bargain. Naturally, they have come out with an Act which takes care of their interests and, thus, violating the real spirit of land reforms.

The Government has estimated that, by lowering ceiling to 12½ acres, about 40,000 acres of land may be rendered surplus with the implementation of these reforms, yet, in practice, it seems far from the truth. Such surplus land is hardly available and so far not a single case of land has come before the court in the valley. The reason for this is obvious. In 1950, the ceiling for agricultural land excluding orchards, was put up at 182 *kana*s and during the last thirty years,

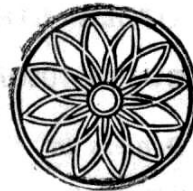
these 182 Kanals had been further subdivided and there is hardly any landholder who has in his possession more than 100 Kanals. There may be a few exceptions but, by and large, agricultural labour is left without land as before,

Similarly, the present Act has excluded orchards from the ceiling. In 1972 Act orchards were certainly included in the ceiling. Whatever orchards were allowed to remain with the owners, were subjected to taxation. This was a step in the right direction and hit the big orchardists. Therefore, to take care of such big orchardists, was passed the Act of 1978, which excludes all the orchards altogether. Under this Act, provision has also been made for the payment of compensation. These provisions are, obviously, concessions to the new emerging class which wields both economic as well as political power.

One might therefore, conclude that Kashmir land reforms have benefited only a section of peasantry and will enrich only their interests. Precious little has been done for the welfare and security of petty tenants and landless labour, these two categories being the largest in the countryside. No doubt, these measures have done away with the feudal set up and has undermined the position of all big landlords. But these reforms have not been able to transform the poor and down-trodden sections of the people and bring about a radi-

cal recasting in their social conditions. They have distinctively benefited those individuals who at the village level were important people and have, therefore, helped in the transformation of economic power from one class to another. The land has now gone into the hands of rich peasant class under the various pretexts and subterfuges with the result that the benefits of the land reforms have not percolated to the cultivating population at the lowest level.

In the coming two decades, it is expected that situation will change in achieving benefits to the actual tiller. It is clear that for this implementation process has to be improved to make this impact felt at the lowest levels of peasantry. The land reforms initiated in the period, 1947-50 were revolutionary in this respect. To ensure that benefits are more, quantitatively, it is necessary to improve the per unit yields and per person outputs by adopting mechanical approaches towards cultivation & collection of crops. Since the ultimate aim is to improve the condition of peasantry, together with land reforms there has to be emphasis on the yields which can be achieved by implementing scientific approaches. It is not a mere wishful thinking that by 2000 A. D. this aspect must have been given due emphasis & together with the implementation of land reforms, the lot of peasantry may show remarkable progress.



Kashmiri Handicrafts

by

A. K. Handu, Calcutta

The charming scenery of Kashmir is directly reflected in its Handicrafts which are renowned the world over for their exquisite workmanship, designs and charm of colour and shades. The handicrafts sector provides gainful employment to thousands of artisans besides offering business opportunities to young entrepreneurs.

Kashmir has been the home of handicrafts since ages. It was during the reign of Sultan Zain-ul-Abdin, popularly known as Badshah or the great King, who ruled Kashmir from 1420 to 1470 A. D. that handicrafts were introduced in Kashmir. He brought skilled craftsmen from central Asia and got local inhabitants trained in a number of handicrafts. Today the handicraft industry occupies an important place in the economy of Jammu and Kashmir state. The artistic skill of Kashmiris has found expression in Papier Mache, Walnut Woodcarving, Silk and Gubbas, costumed Jly, Leather Embroidery and various other crafts.

The importance and role of the handicrafts industry, in view of its vast employment and growth potential, hardly needs to be stressed in the economy of our state which is industrially a backward area of the country. Aware of this the Government set up a separate Directorate of Handicrafts in the year 1972-73 for the development of this industry. The detailed survey and plan development programmes were taken up accordingly. The Industry presently provides employment to well over 1.25 lacs people, and handicrafts production in the state is approximately to the order of 40 crore out of which handicrafts worth Rs. 25 crores are exported. There is a compulsory quality control on Namdhas, export of which without quality control is banned. Carpets, chain stitch, crewel embroidery and wood carving have also been

brought within the purview of quality control on voluntary basis.

For modifications of designs and introducing new patterns, the handicrafts industry also has a separate Department for design development in the name of School of Designs. This department has been working since 1957 on its programmes. Its activities include investigations into traditional designs and patterns into local handicrafts in the light of modern consumer demands and aesthetic requirements. Handicrafts have no longer to be only decorative and ornamental but have also to cater to everyday use in an average house hold.

For marketing in Eastern region, the Kashmir produced handicrafts with genuine quality and price, there is already Kashmir Govt. Arts Emporium at 12-Chowringhee Road, Calcutta-13 functioning with Head Quarter at Srinagar and a net work of branches all over the country in principal towns. The Emporia are a unit of a J & K. handicrafts (S & E) corporation under the worthy management and control of Mr. G. N. Naik (IAS) Managing Director, who with his sound policies has already given a considerable boost to the turn over of the Corporation. For the first time with his efforts a new branch of the Emporia has come up in West Germany. which is the largest buyer of Handicrafts and particularly carpets manufactured in state.

The details of various crafts manufactured in the State, for a wider information are specified as under ;—

Papier Mache

Originally known as Kari 'Kalamdaani' it was introduced in the valley by Zain-ul-Abdin Budshah who became interested in the craft during his captivity in

Samarkand. The name *Papier Mache* is an expression attributed by the French who discovered the craft in Kashmir. In this craft various articles suitable for interior decorations and many articles like Coasters, pill boxes, pen holders, flower vases, powder boxes, writing sets and sets of bowls etc etc, of utility are also manufactured.

The articles are molded on a shape by pounded paper pulp which after drying is sawed out and rejoined. Later on the articles are smoothed and the Naquash (Artist) does the intricate miniature and floral decorations. The articles are finished with a coating of varnish that makes it water proof.

Wood Carving

The valley of Kashmir having intensive green line and being surrounded by immense forest wealth was the main material through which the Artisans express themselves by carving into simple and expressive items of utility. Main designs like lattice work and dragon motifs are the main influences from central Asia, China and Turkistan. The Moral motifs like chinar, Iris, grapes and shawl design are the most popular motifs used in this craft. The most popular and attractive material, walnut wood is seasoned which abounds in plenty in the valley and articles like table sets, Nest sets, screen, other furniture bowls decoration articles, etc etc are made.

Embroidery

Embroidery is one of Kashmir's oldest cottage industries and has thrived well with the passage of time. It was during the 17th century that some Georgian merchants flocked to the valley with the intention of exporting Kashmir shawls. That an idea of quicker and cheaper production cropped in their mind. Before this only traditional Jamawars, which were and still are the craze for the world, were made. Georgian women are dextrous in needle craft. It was logical to have been introduced to the craftsmen of the valley by Georgian traders. Thus gradually Kanishawls were replaced by sozni shawls which were introduced in the foreign market in place of Kanishawls.

The other medium for embroidery that came from above mentioned sources was the chainstitch method or the hook-work method of embroidery. This medium

got its expression in the shape of crewel embroideries chain stitch Gabbas and a variety of costume embroideries like stoles, ladies coats and scarves etc.

Namdhas

Namdha is a thick wool felted rug that is used for floorings as well as on the bed during winters. The Namdha felt is made out of coarse sorting from Pashmina and other wools. The wool is evenly laid on a grass mat and sprinkled with indigenous soap water, The felt is then rolled in the *mate* and tied with rope. The roll is then rolled for a couple of hours, that felts together the wool and turns into a gelled rug. The rug is then washed dried and sent for colourful work embroidery.

Carpet

The first attempt for Carpet weaving was made by the Emperor Akbar who had made such attempts in Delhi, Agra and Lucknow also. After his death it went again into oblivion. Revived effort was made in 1614 A. D. by one Akhon Rahnuma, a Kashmiri trader who visited Persia on his return from Haj pilgrimage. He got some workers and various tools and implements from Persia itself in order to give a start to this industry. The craft lingered on and hardly tried to cater to the local demands of a few noble houses. It was after establishment of East India Company in India that Britishers thought of developing this craft in Kashmir on commercial basis.

The art of carpet making in Kashmir is more or less identical to that which prevails in Persia. In the beginning, the weaver reproduced designs of Carpets from memory involving the design as it revealed itself on the loom. In such designs there was no symmetry nor any colour scheme. This was subsequently improved and sketches in colour were made of designs according to which the carpet was to be made. The quality of carpet is determined by the number of knots it has in a sq. inch.

About 66% of the total manufacture of the woollen and silk carpets (Handwoven) produced in Kashmir are consumed in West Germany which is the biggest market for carpets in the world.

Besides our carpets, the other crafts such as Papier mache, walnut woodcarving, embroideries, Namdhas, chain stitch rugs are appreciated the world over.

Problems & Prospects of Carpet Industry in Kashmir

by

Nisar Ahmed, Jammu

Carpet industry is one of the most important handicraft industries of Kashmir. It is a good source of income and employment to a large number of families in Kashmir and a great contributor to the foreign exchange reserves of the country. During the year 1973 the industry employed 3,443 weavers including 99 females and turned out carpets of the value of Rs. 92.59 lakhs. Almost whole of the production is sold to the foreign buyers. The industry possesses tremendous industrial potential and can play still a vital role in enriching the economy of the State if it is reorganized on modern lines.

Origin of Industry

According to local tradition, the carpet industry was introduced to Kashmir by Sultan Zain-ul-abidin of Kashmir in the middle of the 15th century (1423-1475 AD). Zainul-abidin's father, Sikander, sent him to Tamur in Samarqand to pay homage but Tamur suspected the loyalty of Sikander and kept Zainul abidin as hostage. The young Zainul-abidin stayed at Samarqand for seven years and had an opportunity to see and appreciate crafts which were already developed in the city of Samarqand. On ascending the throne in 1423 A.D. the king paid special attention for the economic uplift of his subjects. The king was very keen to exploit all possible resources for raising the standard of living of the people of Kashmir. He invited the craftsmen from Persia, Central Asia and Arabia and settled them in his court and thus introduced many crafts in Kashmir.

Structure of Industry

The carpet industry in Kashmir is being run both on factory scale and cottage basis. There are large scale units in the private sector which are owned by

merchant-exporters. The Jammu and Kashmir (Sales and Export) Corporation also run a carpet unit at Srinagar. Carpet weaving industry is a major potential craft of Kashmir as it possesses considerable demand for carpet from the foreign buyers. Taking advantage of the scope of industry, the resourceful merchant-cum-exporters have established big factories wherein they employed the poor artisans at nominal wages. The cottage units, larger in number, are scattered over different localities of Srinagar municipality. The skill required by the artisans employed in factories and cottage units is the same yet the carpets manufactured in the factories are definitely superior to the products of cottage units. The reasons for the difference in the quality of the two products are obvious. The factory scale producers belong to the rich class of the society and are quite tactful and resourceful. They are in a position to arrange for all inputs essential for quality production and enjoy the economies of scale, On the other hand, the cottage producers are, in general, uneducated, conservative and financially weak due to which they are carrying on their jobs on traditional lines. The cottage producers are contended with fewer designs, poor dyes and inferior raw materials which involve lesser capital cost in production. In order to overcome the limitations of individual artisans, few cooperative carpet societies have also been organised but the cooperatives have not succeeded in solving the problems of large number of carpet weavers.

Types of production

The carpets produced in Kashmir are mainly of persian origin. Zainul-abidin laid the foundation of carpet industry in Kashmir but after his death, the industry received serious setbacks and became extinct.

"It was during the time of Ahmad Beg Khan (1614-19), a Governor of Kashmir, one Akhun Rahnuma visited Persia after his return from Haj pilgrimage, where he learnt the art of carpet weaving and brought back with him the tools and got the local men trained in the art of carpet weaving." The carpets manufactured in Kashmir can be very well compared in all respects with the carpets produced in Persia except that the industry in Kashmir is the main concern of male workers while in Persia, it is dominated by female workers.

Carpets in Kashmir are produced in different sizes, colours, designs and textures. The sizes mostly manufactured are 3'x6', 4'x7', 6'x9', 9'x12' and 12'x15'. Foreign buyers, generally, prefer to buy large size of carpets.

Design and colour-scheme are of basic importance in carpet production. Kashmir produces carpets of different designs to suit the individual tastes and preferences. At present, carpets of the following designs are being mostly manufactured at Srinagar :

1. Antique Persian Designs-These are classical free hand designs of highly artistic character. There is a wide range of colours used which are usually dark.
2. Kashmiri Designs-These are designs depicting natural scenes of Kashmir-flowers, lakes, chinar trees, almond trees, mountains etc.
3. Chand Chauthai 'Meddillion' Designs The background is mainly plain but the centre and four corners are decorated.
4. Western Designs-These are broad geometrical designs harmonising various colours and shades.
5. Special Designs-In this, map of the city, buildings, gardens and personal photos are woven.

Quality of production

The quality of a carpet depends upon the types of raw materials consumed and the number and chara-

cter of knots per square inch. In the manufacture of superior quality carpets, woollen yarn is used both for weft and warf purposes. There are two types of knots namely, 'Sinha' i. e.. Single and 'Jufti' i.e., double. The number of knots varies from 100 to 300 knots per square inch. It may be noted that the requirements of production are the same either it is carried on a large scale or cottage basis. However, it has been observed that the cottage units produce less superior quality of carpets due to their limitations. In order to control the quality of carpets for safeguarding the interests of the buyers, the Directorate of Handicrafts has introduced the quality control system but on a voluntary basis. The quality control system need to be made compulsory not only in the interests of the buyers but also the sellers who can develop buyers confidence in them when the goods are quality marked.

Volume of production

Whatever scanty statistics which are available show wide variations in the volume of production of carpets in monetary terms. According to All India Handicrafts Board which made a survey of Kashmir handicrafts in 1954, the employment in the carpet industry in Kashmir was 800 and the value of production was assessed at Rs. 20 lakhs. Again in the year 1969 the Board assessed the annual production of carpets at Rs. 55 lakhs. In 1960, the Development Commissioner, small scale industries brought out a Report on Industrial Survey of Jammu and Kashmir State according to which the estimated annual production of carpets in the years 1955 and 1958 amounted to Rs. 53 and 70 lakhs respectively. In a recent survey conducted by the Directorate of Handicrafts in 1973 the annual production of carpets is arrived at Rs. 92.59 lakhs. From these figures of production, the wide variation in the estimation of different agencies are quite obvious. However, one thing is clear that the carpet industry has shown stagnation throughout the period of 23 years and any increase in the value of production can be regarded only of marginal significance. The value of production of Rs. 92.95 lakhs in 1973 will be much reduced if valued at the prices prevailing in the year 1954. The share of Kashmir in total production and export of India is quite small. The other important regions producing carpets in India are Mirzapur-Bhadohi and Agra in

U. P., Amritsar in Punjab and Gwalior in M.P. "Mirzapur-Bhadohi belt is by far the biggest carpet producing area in India with about 87,000 looms compared to Kashmir's 800 and labour force of 1½ lakh of people compared to Kashmir's 3,300, the Mirzapur-Bhadohi belt has share of nearly Rs. 29.5 crores out of India's export of Rs. 31 crores in 1974-75 out of which the share of Kashmir is about a crore of rupees."

Inputs in Carpet-weaving

The main inputs in carpet-weaving are the raw materials and labour. Labour-cost is about four times the raw material cost of a carpet. The only fixed capital is in the form of looms and few small tools which form a very low proportion of total investment in a carpet unit. There are no overhead charges in case of cottage producers while the factory-owners have to incur such expenses on the establishment of office, distribution of goods, etc. The working capital requirements of carpet weaving industry are quite high due to the reason that fairly long period is taken in the completion of a carpet while current expenditure on wages and raw materials has to be met regularly. A carpet measuring 6'x4' and having 300knots per square inch takes as many as three months in its completion by a worker of normal efficiency.

The raw materials required for carpet weaving are the woollen yarn, cotton yarn and synthetic dyes. Woollen yarn is either indigenous (Kashmiri hand spun) or mill spun. Hand-spun woollen yarn is not suitable for high quality carpets and as such is used for medium-quality or coarse type of carpets only. The woollen yarn is used mainly for pile but in case of superior qualities, it is used for both warps and wefts where it replaces cotton yarn. There is no problem of raw materials which can be purchased in the local market from the dealers and stockists. The large scale producers make purchases of raw materials in bulk from outside the state at comparatively cheap rate. In order to protect the interests of the cottage producers, the prices of yarn need to be kept reasonably low. It is possible if the Directorate of Handicrafts arranges the supply of desired quality of dyed yarn to cottage workers at fair prices.

Wages

One of the reasons for the diversion of the crafts-

men from certain lines of handicraft production to other activities has been the low wages rate. The wages in a particular employment should be at least equal to the transfer earnings of labour otherwise labour will move to other profitable occupations. Apart from it, the services of the labour should be recognised fully so that he feels respectful in a certain employment. The wage-rate of carpet weavers employed in factories had been quite low. In the year 1972-73 the wage rate was Rs. 0.83 per 10000 knots. On the recommendation of the Industrial Wage Committee, the wage rate was increased from Rs. 0.83 in 1972-73 to Rs. 1.38 per 1000 knots in 1973-74. This shows an increase of about 66 per cent which the workers considered satisfactory. A worker of normal efficiency can earn Rs. 10 to 15 per day. The factory-owners have shown their resentment on such an increase in wage rate by saying that the Industrial Wage Committee is, perhaps, more concerned with improving the economic conditions of labour than the development of the industry. In fact, the increase in wages has heavily told upon the cottage producers working with hired labour. With an increase of about 66% in wages, the total cost of production has gone up by about 50% of the previous cost as the wages constitute about three fourth of the cost of production.

Wage-rate of carpet weavers in other carpet producing regions of India is much lower than in Kashmir. The plentiful labour and low quality of production are the main reasons for low wage rate in Mirzapur-Bhadohi belt. Amritsar, Gwalior and Jaipur regions. In these regions the wage rate is around Rs. 0.75 per 1000 knots whereas in Kashmir, the wages, including benefits, cost about Rs. 1.50 per 1000 knots. The Development Review Committee has concluded, "Even after adjusting the higher wages which finer qualities involve, the wages in Kashmir are nearly 35 to 40% higher than what they are in the other carpet producing areas in India." The report of the Committee further says, "If the wage rate in Kashmir is allowed to rise unchecked, economic realities will prevail and other areas which are more dynamic may pose an effective challenge to the future of the carpet industry in Kashmir." In my opinion the government agencies connected with the development of Handicrafts in the State of Jammu and Kashmir should have an eye over the cost-price

structure of different grades of carpets and wages should be adjusted accordingly. Kashmir produces carpets of a very high quality for the sale of which the potential buyers in the developed countries of the world may be contacted by vigorous advertising at international level by the government. The survey work taken up recently by the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade to assess the export potential of handicrafts of Kashmir is a step forward in this connection. With these measures, Kashmir will be able to preserve its separate identity in the international market and fetch better price for its carpets to maintain a satisfactory wage level.

Sales

It is the effective selling on which the ultimate development of the industry depends. In Kashmir, the problems of sales faced by cottage units are different from the large scale units in public and private sectors. Generally, the cottage producers sell their products to the established dealers-cum-exporters. The Handicraft Corporation also makes purchases from the small scale producers. Sometimes, the small producers are compelled to sell the products to middlemen at much low prices and are hardly able to recover cost of production. On the other hand the factory scale producers have a better marketing organisation. Many a factory owners have the selling shops in the cities like Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. They also sell carpets to tourists visiting Kashmir and have direct contacts with the foreign buyers. The Jammu and Kashmir Handicrafts (S & E) Corporation sell its stock through the emporium branches located at different places in India and also send consignments to foreign countries

Judging the problem of selling from macro level, there seems to be no problem of selling a meagre output of about one crore of rupees annually. But the problem is likely to arise in future when the output of carpets will increase considerably. The Development Review Committee has rightly examined, "If Kashmir has to increase its production and exports from the existing level of about 1 crore to about Rs. 15 crores a year which is undoubtedly possible, the industry has to be entirely reconstructed for massive production and sale to the export market rather than piece by piece sales to individual tourists.

The total production of Kashmir carpets is dis-

posed off in the following manner : (a) Direct exports, (b) Indirect exports *i.e.*, sales to foreign tourists and residential foreigners in India, (c) sales to domestic buyers and (d) local consumption. It is not possible to present a comparative picture due to non-availability of data with regard to different manners of sales mentioned above. However, it is certain that major portion of production is sold to foreign buyers who can afford to pay the price of high quality carpets of Kashmir. U. S. A., U. K., Switzerland, West Germany and France are the major customers of higher quality carpets made in Kashmir. The exports of carpets from Jammu and Kashmir have been increasing steadily and significantly. In 1974-75, exports of Kashmir carpets were Rs. 2.74 crores as against Rs. 0.75 crores in 1970-71. But the proportionate share of Kashmir in India's total exports of carpets is quite insignificant. Out of total exports of Rs. 31 crores in 1974-75, Mirzapur Bhadohi belt U.P.) accounted for 29.5 crores while the share of Kashmir was about a crore of rupees only. Similarly, the share of Kashmir in international market in oriental carpet trade is negligible. The international trade is of the order of Rs. 300 crores in which Kashmir hardly contributes 1% while the share of Iran is nearly 60 to 70%. It is important to note that the increase in the value of export of carpets from Kashmir in 1974-75 is representative more of higher unit value realisation than expansion in the quantity exported. This is quite clear from the fact that the unit value increased from Rs. 65.68 per square metre in 1970-71 to Rs. 144.48 per square metre in the first quarter of 1974-75, that is by 218 per cent. An increase of about 66 per cent in the wage rate in 1973-74 as compared to 1972-73 has been mainly responsible for abrupt increase in cost of production and hence the selling price. The exports in terms of yardage has been more or less static. At present, Kashmir carpets have to compete in international market with Iran and Pakistan, the two major carpet producing countries in the world. Kashmir will have to make sustained efforts to dispose off additional supplies in international market when its domestic production will increase as a result of keen interest taken by the government to boost production and exports of Kashmir handicrafts.

Prospects

The prospects of developing carpet industry on an extensive scale will be governed by the availability of

trained workers and the demand conditions. Out of total plan expenditure of Rs. 18,606 lakhs for development of handicrafts during the Fourth Plan period, Rs. 10,333 lakhs were spent on training the craftsmen in 13 different crafts. The total number of persons trained were 905 which included 244 persons trained in carpet weaving and design-cum-talim writing. In no other trade such a large number of persons were trained. The Fifth Five Year Plan of the State properly recognises the importance of training by proposing an expenditure of Rs. 97.50 lakhs which is 48.75 per cent of the total provisions of Rs. 200 lakhs for the development of handicraft industry in the State. In the recent years the government of India has taken keen interest in the development of handicraft industry of Jammu and Kashmir State. The government has launched a training programme for carpet weavers on an extensive scale. Under the Central Government's Massive Trading Scheme in carpet weaving 2,800 boys and girls were put under training during the year 1976-77.¹⁸ With the concerted efforts of the Central and State Governments the carpet industry will receive adequate supply of trained labour which will help it to raise production from Rs. 2.08 crores in 1973-74 to Rs. 9.62 crores by the end of the year 1980-81. The employment in the industry is expected to increase from about 3,443 in 1980-81.

So far as the demand conditions are concerned, they are quite bright in view of the changes that are taking place in the world market of carpets. Kashmir carpets have to face competition, specially from the products of Pakistan and Iran. The international trade in oriental carpets is of the order of Rs. 300 crores of which the share of Iran has always been 60 to 70%. But the production conditions in Iran are becoming difficult primarily because of (a) increasing standard of living of Iranians and (b) abnormal increase in cost of production. In this connection it would be proper to reproduce the findings of the Development Review Committee which states.

"Iran's limited population, rise in literacy, increase in standard of living, fast tempo of industrialisation and all round prosperity will all make carpet production increasingly difficult."

The Committee further observes.

"Price are already under pressure in Iran, and the

cost of production is going beyond the reach of the European or American consumers. Iran's share in the West German market—the world's largest market in hand-knotted carpets fell by nearly 40% during 1974-75."

With a decrease in the commercial output of carpets in Iran, the Kashmir carpets have a better future. In so far as Pakistan as competitor is concerned, Kashmir carpets can successfully compete in the international market both in regard to quality and price. As the knowledge and the income of the buyers increased, the demand for carpets will also increase. "An investigation of UNCTAD/GATT estimates the demand in 1975 at 13.8 million sq. meters and by 1980 20 million sq. meters." At present, the carpet manufacturers in Kashmir are much dependent on the foreign and Indian tourists for the sale of their products. The piece by piece tourist sale has to be reconstructed and export trade developed by exploring foreign markets.

From the above analysis it is evident that the conditions for the supply of adequate number of trained weavers and export markets in carpets are quite favourable. However, carpet manufacturers, specially, the cottage producers on whom the future of the industry depends, require State assistance in financing the production activity and marketing the products at reasonable rates. The working capital requirements of carpet manufacturers are quite high but it is unfortunate that a weaver can borrow Rs. 1,500 only under the differential Rate of Interest Scheme on the recommendations of Directorate of Handicrafts. For any amount more than Rs. 1,500 the borrower has to pay the interest at higher rate. In my opinion, the limit should be raised to Rs. 10,000 so that the existing cottage units may expand their scale of operation and the new ones are attracted to undertake production. In order to solve the marketing problems of cottage producers, and save them from the exploitation of middlemen, the Jammu and Kashmir Handicrafts (S & E) Corporation should make proper arrangement of purchases at a price which is not only adequate to pay for wages but also sufficient to induce the cottage workers to undertake risk and preserve their separate identity as producers. The Corporation should take effective steps to sell the products in international market. Massive advertising campaign at international level and opening the sel-

ling branches in foreign countries can help a lot in this direction.

The location pattern of carpet industry in the valley of Kashmir reveals the excessive concentration of the industry in Srinagar municipality.

It is reported that 85 percent of the workers are concentrated in Srinagar municipality and 13.9 per cent belong to other areas of the Srinagar district. Thus 99 percent of the workers alone are working in the district of Srinagar. Other districts of the valley—Baramulla and Anantnag account for only 1 per cent of the total workers engaged in carpet weaving industry of Kashmir.

It should be realised that concentration may limit the further growth of the industry for the obvious reasons that the labour in urban areas is more wage conscious. The industry may not be able to bear any further increase in wages. The prevalent wage rate of carpet weavers in Kashmir is already high. In the interest of the future development of the industry it is essential that it is dispersed to remote areas of the valley. It will help in maintaining the wage level on one hand and providing the work opportunities to

villagers in off-season on the other. The dispersal is possible by providing training facilities to the villagers in off-season on the other. The dispersal is possible by providing training facilities to the villagers by setting up the training centres in small towns. In the initial stage it may not be possible for some individual or families to start independent carpet weaving unit for want of venture capital. Therefore, adequate, timely and cheap finances should be made available to them by the Directorate of Handicrafts or the problem can be tackled by bringing the workers under co operative fold. The cooperatives in Kashmir, as elsewhere in India, has not succeeded in solving the problems of persons of small means and, therefore, cooperatives are looked with suspicious eye by the individual workers. Infact, we can not do away with co-operation which is the ultimate answer to our economic ills, We have already gained lot of experience in the field of cooperation and it is not difficult to reformulate the cooperative policy for the betterment of the common man. The efforts of the Directorate of Handicrafts to identify the cooperatives as viable, potentially viable and non-viable societies are appreciable. The carpet industry of Kashmir has a promising future provided it is reconstructed on the lines indicated in this study.



Harnessing Forest Wealth For Multi-purpose Development

by

S. L. Pir, Jammu

Kashmir is pre-eminently the land of forests which are the mainstay of its economy. A variety of spruce, stately trees some of which are towering masses grow in them, such as Blu Pine, Silver Fir, Himalayan Spruce, Birch, Maple, Beech, Hazel, Wild oak etc. Almost all the mountains are coated with dense forests which besides lending charm and healthful fragrance to the atmosphere, are a great factor of revenue to the State.

The graceful birch trees grow at high altitudes in Liddar Valley, Amar Nath, Kolahoi, Gurais and other side valleys. These areas together with Sonamarg, Gulmarg, Kishtwar and Bhaderwah are rich in Pine, fir and Deodar. The best varieties of pine and deodar are found in the dense forests of Kishtwar and Bhaderwah. The Lolab valley too is thick with them. Its mountain ranges are clothed with cedar and pine forests from summit to base. Belladonna grows well among the firs and its roots and leaves are used in pharmaceutical processes for medicinal purposes.

Forests are replete with wild life, such as ibex, snow-leopard, musk deer, wolf, fox, red-bear, black bear, Barasingha, pig etc. A variety of winged-game is found in low forest areas, swamps and on the banks of mountain lakes. These include ducks, goose, chakor, monal pheasant, pettridge and snipe.

The fabulous richness of Kashmir forests was graphically described, among scores of others, by the French traveller Bernier, who witnessed it during his journey to Kashmir valley in 1165 A. D. He wrote "I saw hundreds of trees plunged into abysses and moul-

dering with time, while others were shooting out of the ground and supplying their places. I observed also trees consumed with fire ; but I am unable to say whether they were struck by lightning or ignited by friction when hot and impetuous winds agitated the trees, one against another, or whether as the natives pretend, trees when grown old dry may ignite spontaneously !"

It was not until 1819 that these virgin forest areas were organised and a separate forest department was formed under Mr. MacDonell, the first Conservator of Forests. He organised the department, marked out the forest areas and made a plan for the control of feelings. Export began to increase gradually until timber became major state industry. With this first major step began the organisation of this virgin forest wealth and its exploitation for multipurpose development.

Forest cover an area of 20,933 Sq. kilometers in the State. These include 718.15 Sq. kilometers of sanctuaries and game reserves. The management of forests has undergone a radical change with the passage of time. The old and conventional methods of assessing forest resources by enumeration of trees has now been replaced by the more scientific technique known as a "point sampling technique". Forest maps are now prepared on the basis of serial photographs to ensure accuracy of the growing forest stock and demarcation of the forest areas. The entire forest area of the State except Keran and Karnah and some patches of forests in Kargil and Zaneskar are

covered by working plans to ensure improvement of stock and maximum yield from forests. These plans run for a period of 10 years. Afforestation of the denuded areas has been going apace under a set programme. Protection measures for this precious national wealth, however, need to be further tightened although several steps have been taken in this direction.

Besides meeting the increasing demand of forest-based industries forests also provide gainful employment to thousands of people. As a result of the scientific management and exploitation of the forest wealth during the past several years, timber has emerged as a great revenue yielding forest resource. As many as 535 thousand cubic meters of timber, according to official statistics, were extracted during 1978-79 as against 455.66 thousand cubic meters in 1977-78. The revenue from forests is reported to have correspondingly registered a marked increase from Rs. 10.82 crores in 1977-78 to Rs. 18.78 crores in 1978-79.

Our forests are also rich in commercial forest products, such as gum, resin, *Zeera*, Colchicum-mushrooms, medicinal plants etc. For a number of pharmaceutical industries manufacturing drugs like Diosgenin, Cedar wood oil, Santonin, Tinctures and other allopathic and ayurvedic medicines, our State is the main supplier of raw material. Over 2500 quintals of drugs like artimesia, pyrethrum, belladonna, dioscorea etc. were extracted from the forests during 1978-79. A factory has been established at Digiana (Jammu) for manufacture of Kutha and the forest department is supplying Khair wood for it from its forests. Raw material is also supplied to the Government Santonin factory and the Match Factory run at Baramulla by the J & K Industries Ltd.

Jammu region is also rich in forest products. The Chir belt covering an area of 1,45,000 hectares contains resin, a revenue-yielding product, which is in great demand by the manufacturing factories. The entire quantity of resin is being extracted by the forest department through wage contractors. Its export is reported to have been stopped now and the output from Chir forests will be supplied to the local industries. As many as 30,544 Metric tonnes of resin will be supplied to various industries. To facilitate the

exploitation of this prize forest product and its transportation to the areas of destination, a network of forest roads has been laid. An expenditure of about Rs. 40 lakhs has been incurred during 1978-79 on construction and upgrading of 780 kilometer long different roads. Several forest Rest Houses and Huts are reported to have been constructed.

As part of the afforestation programme, about 10.45 hectares of land are being brought under intensive plantation scheme to meet the increasing demand of firewood. The forest department has supplied 7.21 lakh quintals of fire-wood during 1978-79 to people in Srinagar and other towns in the Valley. The people living within 3 miles of forests in rural areas are allowed to remove fallen material for use as firewood.

In order to give a boost to the supply of timber to small and big industries, poplars, walnut and mulberry trees in Kashmir valley and in Jammu region Sheesham, Keeir, Saja land bamboo trees are being sown over an area of over ten thousand hectares. Special measures are being taken to prevent ruthless felling of mulberry trees and willows which are in great demand for manufacture of sports goods and for the Sericulture industry in the State. Plantations of popular, willow, walnut, Sheesham, Khair, bamboo and mulberry are being raised and over 10,000 hectares of forest land will be brought under intensive plantation scheme. As the official statistics puts it, there are 102 nurseries in the State covering an area of 103.73 hectares supplying plant material to various divisions of the forest department and other agencies. During 1978-79 50 lakhs plants were raised in these nurseries.

Forests pulsate with wild life. Some very rare species like *Barasingha* exist in these forests. The total area under sanctuaries and game reserves is 718.15 kilometers. Special measures such as enactment of Jammu and Kashmir wild life (protection) Act have been initiated by Government to preserve wild life in the State. The Act has come into force from January 1979.

Forests lend charm and majesty to the State. These are a regular haunt of lovers of sport and

adventure. Such areas as have potentialities for development of tourist traffic and of which there is no dearth, should be linked up with the main towns so that they come within easy reach of prospective tourists and pleasure-seekers. These can be developed into regular tourist resorts by making necessary arrangements for their comfort by way of providing cosy accommodation and making available modern amenities of life. By virtue of sylvan splendour of forests, Jammu and Kashmir commands a unique place on the tourist map of the country.

The employment generating aspect of the forest development merits a brief mention here. According to the official facts and figures the total employment generated through forests is about three million man-days annually. Several amenities have been provided to forest labour. Rest Homes have been constructed for providing shelter to the labour. Medical aid is also being made available to them. The forest department has constructed buildings for primary schools and dispensaries at the main centres of labour. The

anticipated expenditure on this account is reported to be about Rs. 13 lakhs.

Proper and scientific exploitation of forests alone can ensure increasing revenues from this vital sector of the State's economy. The exploitation of forests is accordingly being gradually nationalized. By the end of 1982 according to official reports the forests in the Kashmir division are expected to be completely brought under public sector and in the Jammu division by 1984. Exploitation work was done by the Government Lumbering undertaking which has now been converted into Jammu and Kashmir Forest Corporation from July 1979.

With the steady application of the modern techniques of exploitation and orderly growth of the forest stock and assured protection of this precious national wealth, one would only look forward to more promising prospects of the State's picturesque forests.



Brink Of Extinction

by

Shyam Kaul, Jammu

A survey recently conducted in several African countries has revealed that the elephant is facing extinction in Africa. According to the survey greedy hunters are taking recourse to all conceivable means of destruction, including the use of machine guns and poisoning of water holes, to kill elephants for obtaining ivory.

Many experts believe that the future of hundreds of birds and animals is in jeopardy. Apart from other things, they say, the rate at which carbon dioxide is being pumped into the atmosphere every day, it is certain that the world is heading for an ecological disaster.

These are stray instances of what is happening to our wild life all over the world. The international Union of the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources has estimated that on an average one animal species or sub-species is lost each year, and roughly one thousand birds and animals are now said to be on the brink of extinction.

A hundred years ago the picture was not so grim. Erik Eckholm, an ecological expert says : "More than half the known animal extinctions of the last 2,000 years—that is since the first recorded extinction, which was of the European lion around 800 A. D.—have occurred just since 1900. An average of about one animal species or sub-species per decade is believed to have disappeared during last 350 years leading upto the mid 20th century".

From the earliest times man has been the worst destroyer of wild life, initially for food, but later on, more for pleasure and profit. Together with this, the population explosion in the present century has led to the expansion of man's activities which in turn led to

the continuous shrinkage of forests. All over the world forests continue to be denuded and destroyed for establishing new settlements, for obtaining more and more timber and firewood, and for reclaiming new areas for cultivation. The natural habitats of different species are thus diminishing and disappearing year after year. Extinction would naturally follow.

According to a survey the "world's original tropical moist forests have already been reduced by more than 40 percent", and they are further shrinking by lakhs of acres every year.

On top of all this, huge quantities of carbon dioxide, insecticides, pesticides and other toxic chemicals are pumped into the atmosphere every day, contaminating and polluting air and water. Industrial wastes are polluting river, lakes and seas, and it has been scientifically established that toxic chemicals endanger the procreation of certain species of birds and animals.

Even though Kashmir has remained comparatively free, or less affected, till recently, by the modern chemical pollutants, man's depredations of the wilds have by no means been any less. It is painful to think, for instance, that the great Kashmir Hangul, the one and only species of its kind in the world, which once roamed in thousands over all the wooden slopes of Kashmir, is today confined to one single protected area at Dachigam, with its number reduced to a mere 300 and odd.

During the mid 19th century, the animal was so prolific in the Valley that it used to come very near the human settlements to graze in the cultivated areas. Towards the end of the 19th century, Walter Lawrence says ; "This fine stag may be seen in the Sindh

Valley and the Lolab, and as winter comes on, may be found in most parts of the Valley where it joins the mountains. Stags are always to be found in the State preserves in the Wangut, at Khumuh, and Tral, and later on they descend to the State forest above Achabal".

As late as in 1947, the number of Hangul is reported to have exceeded 3000. Then came the wanton destruction and the resultant depletion in its numbers.

Fortunately the protective measures now being undertaken with the help of international organisation like the World Wild life Fund, have started showing results and the population of the Hangul is once again on the increase. The emphasis now is rightly being laid on habitat preservation and enviromental improvement so as to create an atmosphere congenial for the rapid multiplication of the Hangul.

The fate of another animal, ibex, has been no better. Today this animal is confined to Ladakh and some parts of Kishtwar and is not to be found in Kashmir Valley. In his Sportsman's Guide to Kashmir, Ladakh, published in 1883, 'A. E. Ward, says : "Ibex are still plentiful. In fact on almost every large range of high altitude in Kashmir and in parts of Ladakh, they still exist. Even in the Manasbal hills, a 44 inch head was obtained in December 1877. but I do not think the Lidderwat cliffs will again yield a 49 inch horn".

Mr. Ward says further : "... in Bandipur nullah a 42 inch head was bagged last year ...the rocks above Kolohai and towards Amarnath hold ibex".

The beautiful musk deer, which abounded in Kashmir once, is facing extinction as a result of its indiscriminate killing for the muskpod it yields. The animal is now protected under the State's Wildlife Protection Act, and exclusive sanctuaries are being set up for its proliferation.

An idea of the richness of Kashmir as regards wild life can be had from the following extracts from C. E. Tyndale Biscoe's book, Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade, published in 1922. He says : "An old Padre told me

that when he was in Kashmir as a youngman and travelling by the Sindh Valley. he counted no less than 18 black bears, which he passed in his march up ; they were up on the fruit trees enjoying themselves, and did not attempt to move from the branches they were on. Even now they are plentiful in certain parts....."

About the Kashmir leopard, Mr. Biscoe says : "Panthers prefer dogs to any other animal. They will come right upto one's verandah or tent to pick up a dog as has happened to several of my friends, but my dogs have so far escaped capture".

Good old days, indeed.

One recalls with nostalgia and early morning in any Kashmir village, as recently as 30 years ago, when the whole atmosphere would reverberate with the symphony orchestra of thousands of birds, especially the migratory birds like the Golden Oriole. Tickell's Thrush, Ringed Dove. and many others. The birds are still there but their numbers are perceptibly and alarmingly depleted. On the present reckoning the future is bound to be bleaker for Nature's innocent and melodious singers.

The wildfowl are today found in five or six wetland reserves in Kashmir, but it is only in two or three of them that the birds are to be seen in good number. The number of birds that winter in Kashmir has been sharply decreasing over the years. and there are seasons when the flocks arriving In Kashmir are extereply poor in number.

There was a time when almost all the lakes and wet lands in the Valley attracted wildlife and their number used to be phenomenal. In the very outskirts of Srinagar, the Dal lake used to be a favourite haunt of the wildfowl, and the nobles of the royal court would hunt the birds with the help of trained falcons.

Baron Charless Hugel wrote in 1845 : "Ducks without number live in this lake (Dal), feeding on the roots of the water caltrop, but it is difficult to come within gunshot distance of them. Formerly the taking of these creatures afforded livelihood to numbers of

men, but the present governor, for some reason best known to himself, has discountenanced the practice ; his protection of the ducks however does not extend to a prohibition of the amusement of europeans. on the strength of which one of the boatmen produced a matchblock, about 14 feet long, and begged my permission to take one shot for me. With this I readily complied and furnished him with some powder and shot. At the first discharge, with a single barrel, he brought down eight ducks

Hugel's narrative might appear to be too old, but any one who lived in the vicinity of a lake twenty or thirty years ago would testify that waterfowl was almost a common bird in such areas. Even in Srinagar one could buy a mallard a pintail, a shoveller, or a greylag goose, any time between October and April. The destruction that the chakor partridge, one of the handsomest birds, has been subjected to, is really a matter of anguish.

As far as wild life is concerned, man hardly ever kills for food ; he kills for pleasure or profit, and the killers of birds and animals are unashamedly and euphemistically called sportsmen. We have been defilling God's good earth since we set our feet on it, and we have been wantonly destroying God's good creatures created for our own good and for the good of the balance of nature. How long will we continue to do so ?

Preventive measures by the governments alone will not help. The people all over the world have to be informed and educated about the need to preserve and protect the wild life and desist from destroying it.

Jammu and Kashmir is just a speck on the world map but it has some rare species and subspecies like the Hangul and Snow Leopard. Fortunately the State Government is fully conscious of the situation and in recent years legislative, protective and promotional measures have been initiated to save and increase the State's wild Life wealth. The Jammu and Kashmir Wild Life (Protection) Act, enacted in 1978, provides for very stringent punishment, including long-

term imprisonment, for crimes like poaching illegal trespass into protected areas and game reserves, smuggling of certain furs and the like.

There is a proposal to set up a chain of national parks and game reserves in the State. The more notable among these are : Hemis High Altitude National Park, Shang Game Reserve, Sabu Chukor Reserve. Shey Deer cum Chukor Farm, Kanji Game Reserve, and Bodh Karbu Game Reserve.——all in Ladakh Division. These parks and reserves will be meant for such species as Bharal (Blue Sheep), Shapu (Tibetan Sheep), snow leopard, bearded vulture chukor, Himalayan marmot, ibex, Indian hare, Red fox and some other animals.

In Kashmir Valley, Dachigam sanctuary, the abode of the last viable population of Hangul, is proposed to be notified as a National Park, which will help improve the management of the sanctuary on more scientific lines. The inhabitants of this sanctuary also include musk, deer, serow, Himalayan langur and wild boar.

The status of the Ovura Rakh is also proposed to be raised to that of a sanctuary which would assure better protection for its wild life that also includes a large variety of birds.

Shalbug Rakh is to be developed as a wet-land reserve. In fact in recent years better protective measures in this Rakh have yielded encouraging results in the shape of greater number of waterfowl visiting it. Once it is declared as a wet-land reserve, it will become an ideal protected area for birds like mallard, teal, pintail and pochard.

In Jammu region, a National Park is to be developed in Kishtwar, over an area of 1900 sq. kilometres. This will be the much habitate for Kashmir Stag, musk deer, markhor, ghooral, snowfox, ibex, snow leopard and brown bear.

In this close proximity of Jammu town, the Ramnagar Rakh is proposed to be converted into a sanctuary for such animals as nilgai, antelope, wild cat and many other species.

Demographic Trends in Jammu Region

by

A. N. Sadhu & Amarjit Singh, Jammu.

Introduction

Demographic studies have assumed considerable importance in the recent years. A sudden and explosive increase in the size of population has turned the attention of planners towards demographic investigations. Not only is the size of population important but its composition poses numerous problems to planners. Population has been considered to be a vital factor of economic development. In combination with other factors of production, human population contributes to total production but unlike other factors, it also consumes its produce. The cost of human beings has to be borne by the society, whether they are helpful in production or not, and it is this aspect of population which makes it the most strategic variable in the process of economic development.

In the past few decades, population of Jammu and Kashmir State has been rising very rapidly. The size of population has increased from 21.39 lakh in 1901 to 46.16 lakhs in 1971, (which is more than double the population in 1901), thereby giving a rate of growth of 115.8 percent compared to 129.90 percent at the all India level. After 1931, population of the state had been rising at about 10 per cent per decade upto 1961. but thereafter the state has witnessed unprecedented rise in population. During 1961-71, state recorded a population growth rate of 29.65 per cent which has been the highest in the country and one and a half times the increase registered in the preceding two decades. The past trends of population growth in the state give clear indication that with existing growth rate, the population of the state may touch one crore mark in near future setting off a virtual consumer explosion in the face of meagre resources of the state. As pointed out by the Development Review Committee headed by the

then state Governor, Mr. D. K. Jha, the growth of population in the state has in the past been substantially eating into the overall economic growth. The Committee, thus, underlined the imperative need of restricting population with a view to increasing benefits of development process to the people.

The state of Jammu and Kashmir is composed of three regions viz. the Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. The classification is mainly political but can also be substituted for the natural division owing to different topographical conditions in all the three regions. Socially, culturally and lingually, the three regions are quite distinct from each other. Jammu region which comprises the districts of Jammu, Doda, Udhampur, Kathua, Rajouri and Poonch has a total area of 26395 sq. kms made up of 26226.5 sq kms of rural area and 168.5 sq. kms of urban area. The number, of inhabited villages and towns as per 1971 census stands at 3394 and 26 respectively. The total number of house-holds in the region is 365354 comprising. 313542 rural and 51812 urban households.

Growth of Population :

It is evident that district Jammu is inhabited by a larger population thereby contributing 35 percent of the total population of the region followed by district Doda and Udhampur having 16.48 and 16.32 percent of the total regional population respectively. The Jammu district extends mostly to low-level areas which are irrigated by a number of canals. All other districts of Jammu region which consist mostly of mountainous parts interspersed here and there with small and narrow valleys are thinly populated due to the absence of most of the facilities available in the plain areas.

The decadal trend in population growth during the period 1901-71, shows that district Doda in Jammu region has recorded the highest rate (130.9) of population growth followed by Jammu (111.6) and Udhampur (107.1). It is clear that highest growth of population in all the districts has taken place in the last decade (1961-71) in which four districts of the region viz, Jammu (40.52), Doda (30.38), Udhampur (32.28) and Kathua (32.42) recorded a growth rate of population more than 30 percent. Poonch comes at the bottom with an increase of 10.52 percent only during the corresponding period.

Another variable which is very important from demographic as well as economic point of view is density of population per sq. km in a specified area.

Some districts of the region viz Jammu, Poonch and Kathua are densely populated while others are thinly populated. The high density particularly of Jammu and Kathua districts is mainly due to natural factors like levelled land, fertility of soil, moderate climate, availability of assured water supply etc. On the other hand we have hilly areas comprising districts of Doda, Udhampur and Rajouri with low figures of density as 29.75 and 88 respectively in 1971.

Age Structure & Sex Composition :

Composition and structure of the population of any region is very much influenced by age and sex—the two basic biological characteristics of a population. A person's age is a decisive factor in such questions as the age at which he can or must enter school, enter the labour force, exercise the franchise, get married, retire from service and so on. Age factor is, thus, important both as a demographic variable as well as an economic variable. In the same way, balance or imbalance between the two sexes is an important factor determining the rate of growth and size of the population.

From the available data, it will be observed that the region itself as well as all its districts have registered an increase in 0-14 age group which shows high level of fertility in the region during the decade 1961-71. Persons between the ages 15 and 59 constitute the

productive age group and the persons under 15 years of age and above 60 years of age are represented as dependent as they only consume but do not add anything to total production. In the decade under study the percentage of the persons belonging to productive age group had declined from 51.38 to 47.3 percent leading to a corresponding increase in the proportion of young and old dependents. It may be noted that even on all India level, the percentage of working population declined from about 43 percent in 1961 to about 33 percent in 1971.

In Jammu region, out of total population of 2075640 enumerated at the 1971 census, 1087277 are males and 988363 are females giving a sex ratio of 0.909.

In all the districts of the region the female population has been less than male population. In comparison to urban areas, sex ratio in all the districts has been better in rural areas though not favourable in both the cases. One possible reason of this imbalance between the sexes may be high mortality of females in the preceding decades. With the improvement of health services it is expected that female population will tend to increase in the region accelerating population growth in the years to come. Sex ratio is considered as a barometer of the well being of women members of a society. Unfavourable sex ratio has social implications. It reflects social discrimination against women which in the case of individuals takes the form of negligence and indifference towards women members of the family and at the state level exhibits poor maternity and childcare facilities.

Rural-Urban Composition :

A rural-urban classification reveals the social characteristics of the population and gives an indication of future social and economic changes in the demographic transition of the area under study. Urban and rural settings represent two different patterns of economy with different modes of living.

From the perusal of the available data it is clearly inferred that the region is predominantly rural in character as according to 1971 census, only 13.5 percent of its total population has been living in urban areas. But when compared with 1961 data, one finds that a little change is under way. In 1961,

only 12.2 percent of the population was enumerated as urban, but during the decade this percentage has risen to 13.5 percent. All the districts of the region except the district of Doda have shown a tendency towards decline in the ratio of rural urban population.

Historically it is established that a strong relationship exists between growth of urbanisation and economic development of a region. Sometimes, the flight of population from rural to urban areas is treated as a sound test of economic development, if we apply this test to Jammu region, we find that not such development has taken place so far and there is need for stepping up the developmental effort in the region. However, this test may be viewed with caution in the changing world situation. When urbanisation served as a test for economic development in the west, the percentage population engaged in industry was larger than the percentage of population living in urban areas. These days the situation is different in the third world countries. The percentage population in industry is smaller than the percentage population living in urban areas. The urbanisation has taken place not as a result of shift of population from agriculture to industry but because of excessive population and urban pull. The population of Jammu has risen enormously not because Jammu has been industrialised on a large scale but because of many other non-economic factors. Such an urbanisation, therefore, may not serve as a test of

economic development as it did in the past in the Western Countries.

Future Trends :

It must be repeatedly emphasised that future course of population growth in the region under study will depend mainly on the reproductive behaviour of the people. It can be expected that the population of the region will rise to about 29 lakhs in 2001 A. D. from 20.75 lakhs in 1971. It has been estimated by the Planning and Development Department of the state Government, that if state's population continues to rise at the enormous rate of 29.65 percent registered during 1961-71, the population of Jammu region may reach 27.27 lakh in 1981, rising further to 32.72 lakhs in 1991 and 37.64 lakhs in 2001 A. D.

From above study of demographic features of the region, it can be said that its population is increasing at a fast rate. Besides, the region suffers from high dependency ratio which is a cause of great alarm. In view of the region's limited agricultural resources and scope for industrialisation, the increasing population may prove a drag on the existing resources and may adversely affect the rate of growth of the region. In the light of above analysis, a realistic approach towards limiting the growing population by family planning is immediately required.

Ladakh : Retrospect and Prospect

by

Somnath Dhar, New Delhi

A land where time does not exist. A terrain that resembles the lunar landscape. The highest inhabited area in the world—claims the appellation 'the roof of the world' along with Tibet. Villages carved out of steep mountainsides. Gompas (monasteries) clinging to cliffs and crags—their exotic interiors, incense-saturated, chockfull with priceless antiques, specially fabulous *Thankas* (paintings on silk scrolls). Such is Ladakh, the largest district of Jammu and Kashmir State—its area of 95,800 sq. km covering 70 per cent of the total—which has become an international tourist attraction ever since it was thrown open to tourists, in 1947.

Ladakh has charms all its own, despite its craggy, inhospitable terrain, which presents a marked contrast to the scenic splendour of Kashmir, Valley. It has the highest peaks in the Kashmir Himalayas and the mountain ranges of Zaskar, Muztagh and Kuen Lun. The gigantic barren mountains, devoid of any vegetation, except in some valleys and foothill's oases, offer an endless variety in landscape, breath-taking phenomena of colours and variegated moods of nature. These spectacular aspects of Ladakh, including glaciers and crystal-clear lakes, have been captured in films and described in books by Europeans. Du Mont's *Ladakh and Zaskar* (1980) is the latest German best-seller.

Unique Destination

The Land of the Lamas, that used to be called "Little Tibet (now, in deference to geopolitical changes, the term "Other Tibet" is more in use) attracted 10,210 tourists, in 1978 (from-half that number, in 1976 and 500, in 1974). The slight fall, in 1979, has been more than made up this year with a literal tourist boom, which was manifest when I visited Leh recently. A rather bumpy landing from

the comfy but roaring Indian Airlines Boeing, in Leh, finds one gazing at the most unusual airport in the world—surrounded by bleak and craggy mountains which remind one of moonscape. More than 90 per cent passengers are foreigners, flocking to their much-desired destination, for which, according to Sita World Travel (I) Ltd.—travel agents who led others to open Ladakh to the foreign tourists—many groups have waited for years. Ladakh holds an unique place for its off beat terrain, the Gompas (monasteries) and the candour and hospitality of its smiling people, still largely unaffected by the evils attendant on touristification.

Ladakh offers an interesting—and extensive—field of study to the ethnologist for its polyglot population—a veritable museum of races and nationalities, manifesting an amazing variety of customs, manners and cultural patterns. Buddhists form the majority community of Ladakh. The multiplicity of races and cultures, however, includes the Sunni sect of Islam (to be found chiefly in the town of Kargil) and the Shias, who constitute the majority among the Muslims. Buddhists or Muslims, to Ladakhis are blends of three racial strains: Dards, Aryans and Mongoloids. This racial admixture resulted in the evolution of Baltis, Dukpas and Mongoloid Bodhs (Buddhists). Baltis originally came from Baltistan and mostly adopted the Shia faith. Dukpas hailed from Gilgit and are mostly Buddhists.

Tall, well-built and energetic, Mongoloid Buddhists form the majority in Leh Tehsil. Their charming women revel in colourful dresses and adorning themselves with ornaments. They don't mind marrying their daughters to non-Buddhists or keeping their shrines open to all and sundry. The Dukpas and Brokpas of the Drass area, who have prominent Aryan features of the Dards, and whose women are among

the finest specimens of Aryan beauty, on the one hand, and the nomads or Changthang, who live in tents of yak tail, on the other, delight the social anthropologist. He will observe a Dukpa man wearing ear-rings, bracelets, necklaces and his cap decked with crimson flowers, and will be fascinated by the *Perak* (head-gear) of the Buddhist women, turquoise-studded and quaint-shaped, its embroidered tail running down the backbone. Both men and women wear a long, woollen robe fastened at the waist with a girdle; the women's robe is much the same except that it has embroidery on the borders.

Exotica...

Thus, the men and women dress as they used to, hundreds of years ago, and their houses and habitat tell the same tale of lack of locomotion. This static environment somehow seems to satisfy the westerners' hunger for exotic titillation. And, here, in and outside the Gompas, they discover an all-pervasive peace, which admit, is lacking in their noisy, crowded cities. The high point of their interest in Ladakh this year was the Hemis festival (21st to 23rd June), when the largest *Thanka* in existence (at the Gomba, 48 km from Leh) was displayed, to coincide with the birth anniversary of Guru Padmasambhava who founded Lamaism in Ladakh in the 14th century A. D. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi graced the occasion, and also witnessed the traditional mask dance of the Lamas which goes with every festival.

A happy-go-lucky people, Ladakhis are overly fond of music and dance. These, to be enjoyed at their best in the festivals, form the attractive ingredients of the exotic splendour of Ladakh. Dancing to Ladakh is a solemn medium of high spiritual sentiment. I saw this for myself at the festival at Shey (12 km from Leh), having missed the one at Hemis. It was a pleasure to watch the Ladakhi spectators—men, women and children, all of them attired in their colourful best—as they enjoyed the Lamas circle rhythmically in languorous or quick movements around masked figures lying prone on the ground. The music emanating from drums, cymbals and weird-looking pipes complemented the ritualistic dances of the sturdy Lamas. *Chhang* (local beer) was available—alas, no more served free as was the custom a score of years ago. I tasted it for the first time but it gave me no kick. The dances—generally depicting

the triumph of good over Evil—went on for hours. The foreign tourists mixed with the local people in a natural manner. Ladakhis did not seem to notice them clicking away their cine and still cameras.

Lure of Gompas

Buddhists in Ladakh practise the lamaistic form of Buddhism, the centres of which are the Gompas. There are 29 big Gompas, and out of these the musts on the tourist itineraries are at Hemis (the biggest and richest lamasery), Thiksey (en route to Hemis), Shankar and Spitok (both in the vicinity of Leh), and Lamayuru, the oldest Gomba, near Fatu-Pa, the highest pass on the Srinagar-Leh road. According to an estimate, there are altogether 5,000 Lamas, in Ladakh. The enforced celibacy of males and females (there are more male Lamas than females) is a special feature of the social system of Buddhists in Ladakh. The Lamas couldn't care less about the controversies raging in the Catholic faith about priestly marriages. Many of them are busy teaching children and doing farming and other chores to think of mundane things like marriage and begetting children.

Once the most important link in the old 'silk route' from China to India, Leh, town is in the process of becoming a cosmopolitan town in the wake of the tourist influx, which lasts from June to October. Ladakhis, Tibetans and Yarkandis rub shoulders with Kashmiris and Punjabis (Sardarjis included) who have come up to the 'Moonland' (SITA's phrase) to make the fast back, during the 'season'. The Indian garrison posted in and around Leh constitute different racial elements from the rest of India but there are no problems with Ladakhis, who are a peace-loving people.

In fact, a special adornment to the image of Ladakh in the eyes of the western tourist is the simplicity and naivete of the people. These traits were beautifully captured in photographs of Jaroslay Poncar, recently exhibited by the Max Mueller Bhawan, in New Delhi. Having seen these delightful people and their fabulous Gompas, one wishes to go back to the Land of the Lamas to share their peace with them, to experience the "calm of mind, all passion spent".

Needed Infrastructure

Ladakhis have been doing their bit to accommodate the overflow of international tourists in Leh and other places. But, considering that their housing is limited, and lacking in modern amenities, this makeshift arrangement could arrive at the saturation point too soon. What is wanted is that the Government agencies (whether the State or the Centre) should go ahead with building the hotels and other accommodation that is sadly wanted to cope with the increasing influx of international tourists. The State Tourism plans to build some dak bungalows and tourist lodges in 1980-81 appear to be a poor response to the expected rush next season. It has to be remembered—as this writer has come to know from travel agents like SITA, TCI, Mercury and Ladakh Safari Operators in Srinagar—that numbers of foreign groups have been waiting in queues in Europe, sometimes for a year or two, to get to Ladakh, which is—believe it or not—more of a star attraction for them than the fabled Valley or Kashmir. Indeed, Ladakh will be a prized destination by 2000 A. D. Amongst foreign visitors are the youth—of the West and such travel-minded countries as Australia, Japan, etc.—who don't necessarily belong to the affluent society, but, driven out by 'wanderlust' sail out into the world. The construction of a youth hostel for them at Leh, on the lines of the one at Patni Top, would be a step in the right direction.

A word about the upcoming infrastructure in Ladakh would be in place. The private sector has done more than its bit. SITA World Travel have booked a fine hotel, Keng La Chen for their tourists for the entire season.

The Oberoi group have added to their Leh accommodation with self-contained huts that, in their tent-like appearance, recall Central Asian patterns. This should serve as a guideline for the Tourism Developments, so that they do not go in for highrise hotels in Leh or Kargil. No such modern structures should despoil the old-world look of these towns in Ladakh that constitutes the prime attraction of the region.

More attention needs to be paid to Srinagar-Leh Road on the one side and Manali-Leh track on the other, the former plied by buses (June-November)

and the latter) traversed by trekkers in the same period. The State Tourism authorities could take some cue from the Haryana Tourism people whose highwayside facilities have set the pattern for other states and the expertise has gained them recognition beyond the shores of India.

Just as the India Tourism Development Corporation is promoting tourism of the valley and Jammu attractions like Vaishno Devi, Sanasar, etc., the Corporation should include Ladakh in its publicity campaign in India and abroad. An attempt has to be made to lure domestic tourists to Ladakh. Our own home-bred travellers was a commodity I found conspicuous in Ladakh by their absence. Let us hope that with increased tourism infrastructure in Ladakh, more tourists, domestic and foreign, will visit the exotic land of Lamas and monasteries, and a craggy, forbidding terrain, aptly called 'roof of the world', that is arid beyond belief.

The Horizons.

The repositories of Buddhism in this remote land, the monasteries of Ladakh — the prime 'selling point' with the foreign tourists — have to be preserved. It is not a big job, since there are only a score of large monasteries and a hundred smaller ones. It is time that the Archaeological Society of India takes more interest in these exotic structures. I was astounded to see new paintings on monastery walls, rendered in colours too gaudy for my comfort, where the old ones had faded. Along with the monasteries, the peculiar way of life of the Ladakhis has to be preserved.

No less important is the preservation of the wild life, which includes the markhor, the snow leopard, the marmot, the red bear and antelopes, besides the rare black-necked crane. The project to save the crane (about a dozen only left now) received the special attention of the world-famous ornithologist, Dr. Salim Ali, who led the first-ever search party to locate the beautiful bird in Ladakh four years ago. The State Government, that established a Directorate of Wild Life Protection in 1978, is rightly extending to Ladakh the measures for conservation of wild life, and should ensure that by the turn of the century there is no more threat to the rare species in this region.

The recommendations of the 3-member commission that was recently appointed by the State government to probe the alleged imbalance in the region should be taken into consideration when allocating the Rs. 900 crore Sixth Plan outlay and the annual plan (1980-81) outlay of Rs. 160 crores. It is good to learn that the hilly areas of Leh and Kargil are to receive sizeable amounts but somehow one reads more about the Gujjars and Bakerwals when the recent development is recounted in the State documents. The 70% of villages in the State have been electrified does not apply to Ladakh, where even in Leh I found the generator-supplied electricity lasted for three hours, 8 to 11 p.m. The Stakna

Hydeb Project in Ladakh may well retrieve the imbalance in this regard.

The State's per capita income is said to have risen from Rs. 835 in '74-'75 to Rs. 1000 in 1980. This would hardly cover this remote region. Priority has to be given to irrigation and flood control measures. Much can be learnt from the Defence Ministry's experimental farm near Leh which created a 'green revolution' by growing vegetables and teaching local farmers, who have become prospective exporters. Bold and imaginative measures like this can ensure that Ladakh becomes a prosperous region by 2000 A. D. along with other regions of the State.

The future of the Kashmiri Pandits

by

Z. L. Kaul, New Delhi

There is a striking parallel between the history of Jews, and of the Kashmiri Pandits. The Jewish Diaspora started long ago, when Christians prosecuted them, and the Jews dispersed all over the world, in search of the promised land.

The history of the exodus of the Kashmir Pandits is not that old. With the advent of the Islami in the valley in the fourteenth century, the Kashmir Brahmins started on their long journey to the plains of India, and this diaspora has continued to our own times.

But there is a difference between the old emigration, and the recent one. While the Kashmiries who came out six hundred years ago, lost all contact with the base at home, the present day migrants have retained their links with the "mother state".

In the old days, it was difficult to go back to the valley, because of the difficulties in communication. Now, that the world has shrunk, with the tremendous developments in communication, it is possible to visit one's kith and kin in the valley, and keep alive the relations.

The old Kashmiries, when they came to India lost in a single generation all the contacts with the valley. In one generation, they forgot their mother tongue, and learnt the language of their new habitat. The remarkable powers of adjustment to new surroundings came as a handy tool, and Kashmiries excelled in Urdu, and Persian. This brought them lucrative jobs, especially in the Indian States, and under the British, they changed over to English, getting places of honour in the British Raj.

But for all purposes they ceased to be Kashmiries.

They did not speak the language of their ancestors. However, in marriages they still retained some Kashmiri rituals, though in a debased form. This was due to the old women, who handed from generation to generation, some old Kashmiri ceremonies.

The Kashmiris, who have come out since 1947, still speak Kashmiri, and do maintain link with the valley. They are still traditional Kashmiris, but the same cannot be said of their children. The children learn Hindi, and English, and like old Kashmiries lose their cultural moorings.

The absence of a written Kashmiri language is a great handicap in developing Kashmiri Community into a single cohesive force. Without language, we lose respective identity. This does not apply to other communities in India, like Tamils, Bengalis or Punjabis etc.

What can be done to make a Kashmiri retain his identity in this sea of Indian humanity? It is like a stream, losing itself in the Indian ocean. The children can only learn oral Kashmiri, which is of no use to them, in either correspondence with their old relations or in their studies.

When the language is gone, the Kashmiri loses interest in the Kashmiri music, folklore, and literature. He becomes 'Indianized', and loses his Kashmiri heritage. But there is nothing unusual. The same has happened to Jews. They have lost knowledge of Hebrew and adopted the language of their land of adoption. There are American Jews, German Jews, and so on. In the same manner, we are Indian Kashmiris.

The present generation of Kashmiris in India can

still save the erosion, by talking at home in Kashmiri with their children. But unfortunately, I find that many Kashmiris have developed an inferiority complex, and are conversing in Indian or English, to show their 'superior' culture.

Another trend that is making its deep onslaught on the Kashmiris is the inter-marriage. The Kashmiris are now marrying their boys and girls with those of other communities with a vengeance. It is true that some inter-caste marriages cannot be prevented. But the general tendency is to go in for a different community. As it is occurring at an enormous rate, the disappearance rate of the Kashmiris in the planes of Hindustan, is accelerating.

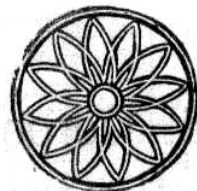
Confronted with these two features, namely the loss of the language, and the inter-caste marriages, I only visualize, the shrinking of the Kashmiri Pandit population in 2000 A. D. The trickle that is coming out of the vally is disappearing in the sands of India. The Kashmiri population (Pandits) in the vally is also dwindling, as all the eligible youngmen are migrating.

Like the parsis, who have come down from 60,000, to 45,000, the Kashmiri Pandits, will also reduce in number.

In the vally itself the Kashmiri Brahmin is faced with heavy odds. Only old people, and those who have vested interests have clung to the vally. The KP's are squeezed out, and in the process going down.

I do not want to sound pessimistic. Individually the K. P. is still brilliant, and has enormous powers of resilience. In today's India, young Kashmiris, both boys and girls are doing a magnificent job. There is hardly any walk of life, where they have not made spectacular performances. But that is on the individual level.

But the Kashmir Brahmin is a great survivor. He has withered many challenges. He will continue to do so but to imagine that in 2000 A.D. he will be a force to reckon with, is wishful thinking,



The future of the Kashmiri Pandits

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Z. L. Kaul, New Delhi

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The present generation of Kashmiris in India can

Kashmiri Pandits

by

J. N. Bhat, Jammu

Once, as the President of the Kashmiri Pandit Sabha (Yuvak Sabha), I approached a big Kashmiri to apprise him about the pitiable condition of Pandits in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. In replay the big gentleman told me that our community was very intelligent and there was enough scope for us to thrive outside the State: why do not we come out as his predecessors had done. My reply to him was that when his predecessors had left Kashmir there was Pathan rule in the State and now after the formation of Republic of India there is secular democracy in India guaranteeing everybody his fundamental rights. If we had to take the same line of action which we were forced to take under Pathan tyranny in the secular India also then what was the difference between the two? On this reply of mine, he became apologetic and appeared sympathetic.

Kashmiri Pandit's intelligence is very well known and well established wherever they are. Recently on a short visit to America I was asked to give a message for a Newsletter run by Kashmiris in America. I felt very happy that Kashmiris have started some sort of communication between themselves and have attempted to have some collective life. I gave them a message stressing there in what they should do. Among other things I said the following:—

"I know my small community is very intelligent, hardworking, smart and impressive, but at the same time its comprisers, besides being highly individualistic, are keen for clean collar professions only and lack the spirit of adventure and enterprise. Independence of India has been a boon for all Indians but it has proved a blessing in disguise for our young people, because having been circumstantially squeezed out of our

beautiful State they have made a mark in scientific and intellectual fields in the whole world and thus proved their worth and saved themselves from the ignominy, frustration, dejection and pessimism which unemployment in the State would have otherwise brought about."

What I mean to submit is that Kashmiris are no doubt very intelligent but this very intelligence has become a curse for them. To translate a Persian poet's hemistich "Oh, brilliance thou hast become a curse for me" This brilliance and intelligence makes him victim of so many hardships, discrimination and political victimisation. Despite so many obstacles Kashmiri Pandit shines in all competitions but personal interviews offset his achievements. The facts are so glaring in this behalf; a casual glance at the examination results and subsequent selections after the interviews establish this. The Supreme Court invariably and even the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir, willy nilly had to set aside so many such decisions as discriminatory and illegal in matters of admissions and employments and promotions. The result of this discouragement has been that Kashmiri Pandits are on the move; they have been forced to leave this beautiful State heaven on earth in search of bare livelihood.

The present position is that the Pandits are spread over the whole of India. Some of them are living in affluent conditions and others are rotting in dens and cells. Some of them have been forced to go abroad also, but their intelligence has helped them in that they have managed to earn their livelihood and live whether in luxurious or in a humble manner. One irreparable harm that has been done to this community is that it has as such disintegrated and after a few decades there will be no separate community known as Kashmiri Pandit, who could be proud of their ancestral and cultural superiority.

The question arises if you are really intelligent why do we suffer and have to face extinction in the long run. To this aspect very few of us seem to devote any serious thought. It is because intelligence apart, we lack collective consciousness, joint action and long range, cum collective planning. A Kashmiri Pandit's only concern is his individual problem and for that he will take recourse to any action.

We have produced very great men and women in all spheres of life but the present generation has seldom even thought of how to keep up our great tradition. On the other hand each one of us is anxious to achieve his personal target no matter what method he may have to resort to. The community is only a catchword, it is never given any serious attention as such.

The second draw-back in our community is that we are not adventurous and would not undertake any new ventures or go after hazardous jobs. We would run after clean collar jobs ; preference of a Pandit is first to become a doctor or engineer or to enter Government service as even an L. D. C. He would never look beyond this and never take notice of the progress the world is making in the other fields and spheres and the profits that an adventurous young man can derive from new enterprises. During my short presidency of Pandits I had been assured by the then Government that if suitable people were forthcoming they would get permits for running scooters and mini-buses. Much though I tried to persuade the educated unemployed people to adopt this profession I could hardly persuade only one person to do so. After a year or so he was so thankful to me because according to him he made Rs. 1550—per month from a mere auto-raksaw.

India is progressing remarkably in all fields of life science, technology, business of all kinds, industries etc. There are many self-employment schemes run by the Central and State Governments yet very few Pandits would come to adopt any new vocation ; few of us who have entered the domain of business or taken some other enterprise are doing excellently well. But the social environment prevents the majority from taking to any such non-governmental jobs. We see people around us who were living hand to mouth

or even poorer, yet in the span of 4 to 5 years they have become fabulously rich or even millionaires by starting business, factories or other enterprises. We see all this yet do not feel attracted to emulate such people.

The other defect in our set up is that we never think in any collective terms, never adopt plans which would benefit the community and not the individual. Although so many well-established business men were prepared to start business enterprises factories and what not to absorb as many Kashmiri Pandits as could be possible, the response of the community as a whole was very dis-couraging. A Pandit would hanker after Government job as against any other which would yield many times more. Even in the marriage market a Clerk earning hundreds is preferred to a business man earning thousands.

On the social front also we are very backward. Our social customs are so bad that a person with ordinary income finds it impossible to pull on respectably in the society. No matter howsoever low a Kashmiri Pandit is placed, he will try to outshine his richer neighbour, friend or relation in observing high standars at the time of the marriage of his children and other social functions. Marriages of children have become business propositions between boy's and girl's families and many alliances do not mature because the parents of a girl cannot comply with all the demands of the boy or his parents. Much money is wasted in grand shows put up on such occasions and so many people in the past and even in the present have been compelled to sell their properties in order to get a suitable match for their daughters. However, recently a tendency has developed in some young men who have spurned the question of dowry but the percentage of such gentlemen is very small. These social evils have eaten into our vitals and have made the lives of so many middle class people even almost impossible. Reforms in this direction were attempted many a time but all ended in smoke. The result being that we are in a very bad shape in the case of getting matches for our daughters. Some sad cases have also taken place where girls were compelled to change their religion simply to avoid the social evil of dowry.

As a result of this narrow outlook the Pandits are

suffering present disabilities. Their religious places have been encroached upon and they themselves encourage encroachments of their property, religious or otherwise. Pandits had huge junks of properties attached to shrines all these have gone to dogs; some were sold for a song, even cremation premises have been sold by unauthorised persons. In the State of Kashmir, Shitalnath, which was the headquarters of the community, is in shambles. You will not find even a *darie* to sit on. A printing press at Shitalnath was sold as scrap iron and sale proceeds thereof were embezzled. Durganath land, a valuable asset of the community, has been sold and leased out in bits. Even otherwise all the properties belonging to the Pandit community are getting finished. If they were properly attended to and put to proper use they could be converted into business concerns like hotels etc. with public finances. It would give the community a good income which could be used in assisting some of its destitute fellows, young men and women. This is not so.

The worst spectacle of Pandit life is manifest in the State and particularly in the Valley where every two or three people think that they are the wisest in the community and assume the role of leaders. There is no unanimity between the individuals of the community. As a result there are so many organisations and so many leaders with no following. So much so that to preserve their so-called chairs litigations are resorted to. Kashmiris who live outside the State have given a little better account of themselves. They have their organisations or journals and enjoy some collective festivals and functions. This can be explained on the ground that all of them feel the pang of having been driven out of their mother state and hence they feel that they should have some collective feeling and activities also. But even in such cities the state of affairs after sometimes becomes difficult when the basic egoistic character of a Kashmiri Pandit comes to surface.

This being so what is the remedy? Are we to get extinct as a community and merge in other sections of the vast Indian population or is there still some hope of our revival and survival? Personally I am very much pained at the present state of affairs—not that I am a communalist; I abhor communalism and have firm faith in a secular set up of society. But what I am hurt about is that the community is suffering because it has a particular nomenclature. Such a state is highly deplorable particularly in a secular and socialistic society which India professes to be. We have tried to present our grievances to outside Governmental authorities but have not achieved much. Therefore we have to think ourselves whether to survive or not in the midst of all untoward environment. The solution is not impossible if we shun for a moment our individualistic tendencies and actions and think in a collective manner. Our problem can be easily solved because ours is a small community and our problems do not require much of wealth to keep us alive. Intelligence we have but it has to be properly harnessed and used for the common good and not for personal aggrandisement only. When I became President for a short time I envisaged a central organisation run in Srinagar with branches throughout the State and other cities of India with a common programme and collective thinking about our economic betterment and removal of our social evils. But for this purpose there should be the patronage and backing of the community as such. No self-respecting person is prepared to risk his little position by accepting the leadership of this community. I would have wished that we sink our small differences, cease to be critical and give our whole-hearted support to him who may, by a majority choice, be elected. I have no personal ambition to head any such organisation but there are people who have burning passion for the betterment of the community. Let us support them and let us evolve some schemes for the economic upliftment of the community.

Kashmiri Pandit Community and Social Reforms

by

Ramesh Chandra Bhatt., Jammu

Our Community of a handful Kashmiri Pandits, having individual existence for ages in past and the original inheritance in Kashmir valley has now been scattered due to some unfortunate events. Right from the time of attacks from the frontiers upto time of partition of India in 1947, and the attack by Qabalis, the community has been the victim. But every time these people with their intellectual power have been able to stand. Since partition in 1947, this community has got scattered and spread not in only every part of India but abroad too, where again they have set an example in every field of life.

The change of environment no doubt has made the community to forget the ages old tradition and the new ways and modes have crept in our social life and have made our original culture and tradition a bankrupt. To curb this and keep our old pattern alive, we have to give a deep thought and chalk out a programme for our practical use to see our community keeping up its cultural and traditional inheritance.

Now the question arises as to what can be done in this direction and for this our biggest organ "KOSHUR SAMACHAR" (Kashmiri Samiti, New Delhi—110024) has been trying hard to do what they can by means of education, suggestions and thoughts being put forth by certain writers and by means of holding seminars etc. But merely this cannot solve the problem and there is yet a lot to do. The main evils, we have at present are :—

UNEMPLOYMENT :—Our community has for ages adhered to clerical profession which suited it in

the past. There is no such scope at present and does not seem to be in future because of the growing unemployment throughout the country. Therefore, our community must give up this practice and take to other professions & vocations.

EDUCATION :— Vocational education is necessary and is the need of the day. Mere academic qualifications do not seem to help the community any longer.

DOWRY ;— This is one of the biggest social evils. This problem has been and is alarming our community. Stress is being laid through every organ of the community to evade this, but no improvement has so far taken place. The condition is worseing day by day and is deteriorating the image of the community. Some solid steps must be enforced to save ourselves and the young generation, that is falling prey to this social evil.

LANGUAGE —It is a pity to say that Kashmiri language is now almost fading, The community especially the young generation is feeling shy of speaking Kashmiri language even among themselves, though, like other communities, we should have been proud of having a language of our own. Steps must be taken to keep our language existing.

Our practical performances will help a lot. It is only our young generation who have to shoulder the responsibility of keeping the image of the community up.

kashmir Sabhas and Their Role

by

M. K. Ogra, Calcutta

To me, the main aim and objective of any Association, Sabha or Samiti unconcerned with politics is to foster and preserve cultural and social ties and above all, help one another and strive for upliftment of society or community as a whole. Kashmir Sabha, Calcutta and other Sabhas and Samities of Kashmiris in the Country came up as a matter of necessity for obvious social, economic and cultural reasons after 1947 exodus from the Valley.

Recollecting what led to the formation of Kashmir Sabha, Calcutta, we are reminded of untimely and sudden demise of first wife of late Pt. Srikanthji Khar in 1954 which perhaps aroused the feelings for an Association in Calcutta. This aspiration for a Kashmiri Association in Calcutta was rekindled in early 1955 when Navroz/Navreh get-together was organised at the residence of Shri S. K. Handoo of Theatre Road at the initiative of a sub committee of which smt. Subhadra Haksar was the convenor. The hectic activity that followed resulted in the first get-together of some Biradhari, members at the Howrah residence of Pt. Jagan Nathji Munshi, now a Bombay Nivasi. Later on, framing and adoption of the constitution was completed in 1955 itself and the Sabha took a formal shape. Elections under the supervision of Returning Officers strictly guided by the constitution used to generate a mass interest and involvement. Celebration of festivals like Navreh, Shivratri and Janam Ashtami and an Annual Hawan started in 1960 became regular features. In the beginning, most of our functions excepting Navroz used to be on contributory basis. Children function became yet another regular annual feature. Community outings once a year for the first few years also received mass response. Publication of Monthly News letter as a community news media was started in 1959 on August 15th. A small booklet 'Rituals and Festivals of

Kashmiries' with an explanatory note for each festival was published in 1957.

First Annual number of News letter came out in 1960 with the main idea of collecting funds for the Sabha. Pada Yatras were undertaken to the residences of all the Kashmiri residents during the presidency of Shri Motilal Ji Zutshi. The foundations thus laid are quite strong and most of the activities still continue. Some other laudable objectives like a Co-operative Society, a Community Hall and Temple could not see the light of the day so far, though a beginning was made by acquiring a piece of land in Sonarpur, because of various reasons mainly political turmoil and uncertainty since 1967 and exodus of several community members to other parts.

In recording these memories, one cannot help remembering the important roles played by Shri Shyam Sundar Raina, the first Secretary and first Editor, late Pt. Kashinathji Razdan, late Shri Chunilalji Wattal, Shri Somnathji Wali now a Baroda Nivasi, Shri M. L. Zutshi, Smt. Subhadra Haksar and Dr. B. K. Moza. By mentioning few names here, I am not belittling the contributions from other members, but in any Organization, some have to play a pivotal role and the mention herein is in this context only. In the recent years, role of Lt. Col. P. N. Kak as Sabha-President is commendable and to put it briefly, the Sabha is reactivated under his guidance.

Achievements have been commendable. The community is closely knit. We have associations of Kashmiris all over the country. No doubt much more is still left and wide scope exists for more meaningful activities. More cohesion and involvement is necessary. The tendency of closed group-type activities and assemblies would be a deterrent

and create dissensions. General involvement of community members is required for more productive and purposeful ends. Youth involvement is necessary for the future reins of the Sabha and the Samities have to pass on to them. The tendencies of making things complicated and rigid coupled with inflexibility of attitudes on vital issues where community interests are involved in general has to be controlled and checked, for such signs are dangerous and cause decay at the very roots of solid foundations. Marriage and employment bureaus have to be developed for preserving community-links, heritage and growth. Most of us have been helped or helpful in these matters, but for a sustained and more meaningful purpose a regular sort of an Agency on State and National level is necessary. What is more important and need of the day is that all Sabhas and Samities or associations including those in Kashmir—our ancestral link—have to come closer and chalk out policies and programmes for national integration. Formation of all India Kashmir Samaj is a step in the right direction. This All-India body apart from being a linking organization must frame National policies on various urgent issues like dowry system, marriage and employment problems, preservation of our cultural heritage and propagation of Kashmiri language and last but not least, prepare an All India Directory of Kashmiris and also publish an official organ as a news and views media for the benefit of the community. Starting of vocational and information centres at Srinagar, Jammu, Amritsar, Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and other places for our youths so as to guide them for selection of right type of training and education they need for ready employment markets and potential to face the growing competition and find their rightful place.

In the valley, we have several mushroom organizations and gone are the days when leaders like Kashyap Bandhoo and late Jialal Kilam knit the community together and launched laudable programmes for reforms and upliftment. This aspect also needs to be given priority attention and the associations outside the valley do owe a responsibility to their brethren

there so as to bring them together and render them advice and guidance, for neglecting the main source and the hereditary linkage would seriously affect cohesion and National brotherhood and cause decay at the very root of our national existence? Yuvak Sabha and Martand in the good old days, as all of us would recollect, enjoyed popular support and were pride of the community as a whole. Reactivating the 'Martand' and 'Yuvak Sabha' to serve as a link with our old heritage could also be a step in the right direction. What we need today is a leadership for mass involvement, sincerity and dedication to give a practical shape to various thoughts for our rightful existence and maintenance of our national image left behind by great leaders, our community has produced over centuries.

Kashmir Sabha Calcutta has many of its main objectives to fulfil. A Kashmir Bhawan at Calcutta being the long felt need & desire to serve as a centre for our community activities and a symbol of brotherhood is a must and I do hope we will have one such centre here before the end of the decade under the dynamic leadership of Cal. P. N. Kak. Monthly Newws Letter (Vitasta) appearing only now & then has to be a permanent feature. This news media requires serious and thoughtful attention to be a useful, thought provoking & guiding link with our past present & future. Dr. Brij Kishen Moza has done a yeoman's service to the community as a whole with publication of two very informchive volumes of Annual Vitasta. Compilation of a complete directory of the community members residing in eastern part of the country is yet another important aspect to be attended to. Last but not least is youth involvement,—the most important need to make the Sabha see its future through the aspirations of our talented youth. I recollect how usefully some of us just in our twenties in 1955 when Sabha was formed have been carrying on the spirit. Now after over two decades when our youth have had fortunately better opportunities we do expect more effective participation to lead the Sabha in the fulfilment of many objectives to keep the community closely linked & be useful to one another.

Article 370 and Kashmiri Pandits

by

Triloki Nath Kaul, Srinagar

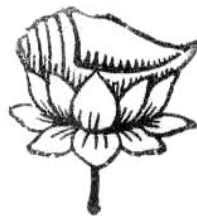
In a way it is Kashmiri Pandits who may be said to have planted the seed of Kashmir's autonomy. Though professing the Hindu faith, they preferred to charter their own course in matters pertaining to rituals and modes of worship. As a matter of fact, Kashmiri Pandits devised an exclusive Purana, Nil Math Purana, to guide them in religious affairs. It was here that Shavist philosophy flourished for centuries. Non-Kashmiri Hindus in general know little about it though they feel over-whelmed with its liberalising spiritual values.

In the modern era, it were the Kashmiri Pandits who gave a lead in demanding Kashmir for Kashmiris. They found that along with the Muslims they were being treated as second class citizens as compared with Punjabis—both Hindu and Muslim—who practically monopolised trade and services. Strong pressure of public opinion forced the Maharaja's hands to formulate measures for protection of the interests of the local inhabitants. Kashmiri Pandits can justifiably take credit for bringing into existence the State subject laws which succeeded in one important respect at least viz preventing non-State Subjects from buying agricultural land by offering fancy prices.

However it was only the mass revolt in 1931 that forced unwilling Maharaja to grant freedom of Press

and Assembly. Kashmiri Pandits gave full support to this demand although it was first voiced by leaders of the Muslim Conference. As a matter of fact, the earliest local newspapers were brought out by the members of this community. Though working on separate platforms, progressive sections of both communities started going in the same direction to end feudal exploitation and usher in democracy. Since in the eyes of rulers they were looked down upon as 'hattoos' or beasts of burden regardless of the fact whether a Kashmiri was a Hindu or Muslim it did not take them long in joining hands in a common struggle. This in short is the genesis of the big political change of the early forties viz replacement of Muslim Conference by the National Conference.

In the formulation of Article 370 Kashmiri Pandits had no direct hand. But the provisions made therein that the States autonomy would be protected and Kashmir would not lose its identity, were quite in accord with their aspirations. In this connection it is worthy of note that the agitation launched by Praja Parishad against Article 370 in the early fifties found few supporters among the Kashmiri Pandit community. I know it for a fact that Pandits occupying important position outside Jammu and Kashmir are all for retention by Kashmir of its distinct cultural and ethnic personality.



Nehru's Advice To Kashmiri Pandits*

During his visit to Kashmir in September, 1940, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had an occasion to address a meeting of Kashmiri Pandits organised by Yuvak Sabha at Shital Nath, Srinagar. Although it is 1980 now, much of the advice tendered by Panditji appears still relevant today and hence we carry it in our columns.

"I warned them not to fall into the trap into which minorities so easily fall. I spoke frankly and freely, for, having been born in a Kashmiri Pandit family, I could take liberties with my own people.

While every individual and group deserved equal protection and help from the State, the idea of special safe-guards for a minority group was full of peril for that group. For such safe-guards led to dependence on extraneous help and weakened the group's spirit of self-reliance ; the special privileges amounted, in effect, to little, but they created walls of prejudice which injured the group, and barriers which prevented growth.

Above all, they led to a narrowness of outlook and to isolation from national activities and the life-giving currents which moved the masses, At any time such safe-guards and special protection were dangerous gifts to ask for or to receive. In the dynamic world of today, with vast revolutionary changes taking place before our eyes, it was folly of the first order to imagine that such safe-guards or privileges could hold and protect. Only strength of mind and purpose and unity of action could give some protection.

Safe-guards and special protection might, perhaps, be needed by a group which was very backward educationally and economically. They were in the

nature of crutches for the lame and the weak. Why should those who were keen of mind and swift of foot require them ? No one had ever accused the Kashmiri Pandits of lack of intelligence or of ability to adapt themselves to a changing environment. All that they should demand was a free and open field for talent and ability.

I pointed out to them what an outstanding part Kashmiris, both Hindu and Muslim, had played in the whole of India, although they were small in numbers. In public life, professions, services in States, in cultural activities, they had done remarkably well without the least help or protection from anybody. Many of the Muslim Kashmiris are prominent in many walks of life in India. One famous name stands out above all others—that of the poet, Sir Mohammad Iqbal who was a Sapru.

Kashmiri Pandits are more recognized in India as Kashmiris. They have done astonishingly well, although in numbers they are probably under five thousand outside Kashmir. I told my audience with becoming modesty, that during the fifty-five years of the life of the Indian National Congress, for seven years Kashmiri Pandits had been presidents—a remarkable record for a handful of people who had migrated from Kashmir to the plains below.

So I spoke laying special stress on the need for every group, if it was to count in the future, to throw its weight on the side of the masses, to join the national movement and draw strength and sustenance from it. No group or community which was continually shouting about itself, and demanding this and that special privilege or protection, would make much difference to the future that was being shaped. That future would be shaped without it."

*Excerpt from the NAWA-I-SUBH, Srinagar ; received with thanks from its Editor, Mr. J. N. Zutshi.

Indian Secularism*

by

Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah

Arnold Toynbee the great historian has characterised the Indian civilisation as one displaying in "manifest tendency towards an outlook that is predominantly religious". In the light of this fact, emergence of India as a secular State in the mid 20th century must be regarded as the significant political, social and religious phenomenon.

That India is striving to be a secular state is remarkable not only in terms of the contrast with the policies of many countries. However, it would be historically incorrect to suppose that secularism in India has sprung all of a sudden. The terminology might be different but the spirit was always there. The religiosity of Indian life should not be confused or considered as something contrary to the concept of secularism. India is basically liberal and human—the equivalent of modern secularism.

It is correct that India's past has witnessed two opposite trends and there has been clash between orthodoxy and liberalism but it is liberalism which has emerged victorious in the final analysis. There have been rulers and potentates who tried to bend or stretch the Indian polity in a particular direction but as soon as their hold loosened, the soul of India asserted itself and the *status quo ante* was restored.

This is what is termed *Indianness* and this Indianess is neither Hindu nor Muslim, neither Sikh nor Christian. Indian temperament and the way of life is free from obscurantism, bias and communalism.

The Indian secularism has its roots in the past. We get the glimpses of religious toleration in the teachings of Buddha. Emperor Asoka was the embodiment of the Aryan conception of Kingship. He was the father of his people, their sole guide and protector. He based his administration on human

considerations. The spiritual elevation of the subjects over which he ruled, was the dominant motive. Asoka professed Buddhism, which is a missionary religion like Christianity and Islam. He was a staunch upholder of Buddha, the propagation of whose teachings was his life—mission. It must be said to the credit of Asoka that he granted full freedom of conscience to the followers of the rival creeds of his time and never stained his hands with the blood of religious persecutions. As a matter of fact, in the annals of kingship there is scarcely any record comparable to that of Asoka, both as a man and as a ruler. In his efforts to establish a kingdom of righteousness after the highest ideals of a theocracy he has been likened to David and Solomon of Israel in the days of its greatest glory.

The secret of the greatness of Akbar lies in his attempt to build India a nation and to establish a common citizenship. Akbar took the teachings of Guru Nanak and Kabir to the imperial level. He fully understood the spirit of the age and the secular temperament of India. Akbar was an eclectic in religion and philosophy. Akbar's Hindustan was neither a land of Hindus exclusively nor that of Islam aggressively.

The period between the fall of the Mughal Empire and the Independence of the country from foreign rule, may be regarded as the darkest period of Indian history. But in spite of confusion and chaos, political servitude and poverty, the Indians never deviated from the path of secularism which is amply born out by our struggle for freedom.

Modern India gave birth to the great seer and statesman, Mahatma Gandhi, who combined in himself the vision of Buddha, spirituality of Asoka and the statesmanship of Akbar. Out of political chaos and

*Courtesy Mr. J. N. Zutshi, editor the *Nawa-i Subh*, Srinagar.

unstability was born a regenerator who restored India to her pristine national status. The mission of Mahatma Gandhi was one of free Indian Republic—an India equally claimed as their homeland by members of all creeds and communities, Partition, rather the practical severance of a single homogeneous block of the Indian people, though differing on certain fundamentals, is the heaviest blow ever delivered by the ingenuity of an alien rule who were no well-wishers of this vast sub-continent, and whose prosperity would have been an eyesore to that of their own.

The blood of Gandhiji anointed and consecrated the secularism in India. The Indian secularism no longer remained a dream, an aspiration. It became an article of faith, the basic tenet of the state policy of the country.

It is impossible to think of the secular state in India apart from the tremendous influence which Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Dr. Zakir Husain have exercised in implementing this principle. They have indeed been the great champions of Indian secularism. The impact of their convictions are writ large on the body politic of India.

If one wants to see the culmination, fulfilment and zenith of Indian secularism, he should see Kashmir. Kashmir is an unique example of unity in diversity. Kashmir is the land where, in spite of differences of race, religion, language and culture, national unity and emotional integration reign supreme. If one wants to see the confluence of different religious thoughts and cultural streams, he should rush to the land of Lal Ded and Shaikh Nuruddin. From the very beginning, Kashmir became the nucleus of conquerors and preachers. Hindu, Budh, Hun, Mughal, Pathan, Sikh and Dogra found solace and were transformed into one well-knit whole in the Valley. You will find a pleasing synthesis of the Chinese, Persian, Greek and Indian art in Kashmir.

When we examine the day-to-day life of the Kashmiri people in historical perspective, we find that secularism is the anchor. In spite of the religious beliefs and practices, religious fanaticism and bigotry are miles away from the life of the common man.

It is said that Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin Budshah was the precursor and forerunner of Akbar, the Great. But we should never forget that not only one Budshah but the whole of Kashmir was the ideal before Akbar and that is why Kashmir is not only the crown but has served as the beacon for the rest of the country.

Secularism is important to the future of Indian democracy itself. It is a fundamental aspect of India's democratic experiment, an experiment which might conceivably break down as much by establishing Hinduism as the state religion as by eliminating freedom of the press. In 1950, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru declared ; "The government of a country like India, with many religions that have secured great and devoted followings for generations, can never function satisfactorily in the modern age except on a secular basis". From the standpoint of national unity and stability, the principle of secularism represents a sound practical approach. Any other approach would tend to alienate the religious minorities and impede the processes of national integration.

At present, however, there are, to be sure, some very serious dangers facing secularism—dangers of ill defined objectives, of faulty policies, of failure in implementation.

The most serious danger is that of communalism, using the term now in its broadest sense. It is the tenacious loyalty to caste and community which tends to undermine the secularism at every turn. Communal loyalties easily lead to communal rivalries, and this tendency is greatly accentuated by an underdeveloped economy in which there is never enough of anything to go around. Communal rivalries are endemic in India, and easily erupt into communal conflict.

THE MOST URGENT REQUIREMENT IN PRESENT DAY INDIA IS THE DEVELOPMENT AT THE STATE AND LOCAL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT OF BOTH THE WILL AND THE MEANS TO PUT DOWN COMMUNAL VIOLENCE QUICKLY AND STERNLY. THE FACT IS THAT COMMUNAL AGITATORS AND IRRESPONSIBLE COMMUNALLY MOTIVATED NEWSPAPERS ARE APPARENTLY STILL ABLE TO INDULGE IN THEIR ANTI-SOCIAL ACTIVITIES WITH IMPUNITY DAMAGING THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE NATION.

Conclusion

by

Gopi Krishna, Srinagar

(i)

Today mankind cannot survive for long,
Divided into fragments, if a strong
Decision-making Body at the head
Of one United World, whose rule is spread
To each and every corner of the globe,
Is not appointed soon to look and probe
Into the main affairs of every State,
Drawn from all nations now, and not too late,
Kept on the o'er-all task to build and plan
A new world-order for progressive man.

It is high time that mankind heeds the signs
Which point to what the racial mind designs,
What is the surest method we can find
To build a war-free world for humankind,
And end the menace of a nuclear war
Which, from all indications, is not far,
To save from horror, death and agony
Millions of guiltless souls who cannot see
How close they are to Yawning Jaws of Death
Or life-long torture borne to the last breath.

Of all this mad race for supremacy
In nuclear power the only end can be
A confrontation on a luckless day,
And this is what my Visions, too, portray.

A cry arises from my troubled heart,
A crushing load descends to press me down,
I feel all of my body ache and smart
And in a gloomy sea of sorrow drown,

As with eyes open and the mind awake
I am allowed to watch scene after scene

Of stark, appalling horror that will make
The blooming earth, now lovely and serene.
A foul inferno, glowing red in space,
Where human lust, become the cause of Doom,
Millions will kill, and millions clean efface,
Or slowly with dire agony consume.

Whole towns will vanish or in ruins lie,
And deserts burn where crowded cities were,
Millions with hunger, thirst or terror die,
And millions run round shrieking mad with fear.
Millions disfigured, crippled, wounded, maimed,
Tortured at every step, would limp and crawl
Their faces pale with anguish, eyes inflamed,
With hardship or exhaustion dead to fall.
Men, women, children, sick, infirm and weak
Dishevelled, sleepless, hungry, plagued by flies.
Too ill to drive them off, to move or speak,
In vain will look for help till their hope dies.

No horror story e'er conceived so far,
No tale of ghastly murders ever told,
No picture of the havoc done in war
Can match the ghastly scenes that will unfold.

Fiery cyclones racing with lightning speeds,
And flaming hurricanes, extending far,
Will chase escaping crowds to burn, like reeds,
Or roast them coal-black, as if dipped in tar.

This false, deceptive glamour, pomp and show,
In which pretentious Vanity delights,
Nemesis will into disorder throw,
And on more sober lines rebuild the sites.
For nature has decreed that every time
Man barter his soul to indulge his lust,

All that he harvests by this heinous crime
Against himself, will be reduced to dust.

This age of boundless wealth, uncounted goods
And endless wonders, which grow day by day,
May end soon, for on it disaster broods,
And scorching hurricanes are on the way
To close an era that has grown too rich
And reckless for man's health and safety both,
And, if not ended at this moment, which
Would seriously distort his inner growth.

Why view the future with a sinking heart,
And try to find retreats to escape the doom,
The Lesson is designed to cause a smart.
For wholesale healthy changes to make room.

The wonder is we readily accept
The world of matter from the tiniest grain,
But when it comes to Mind do we suspect
A World of which an Atom runs our brain ?
This atom, clothed in flesh, we call the soul,
Ordained by slow ascent to know itself,
But oft in dark about its real goal,
Is lured by tempting pleasure, power and pelf.

For ages alchemists endeavoured hard
To find the Secret of Eternal Youth,
But nature does her Treasures so well guard
That few of them could hit upon the Truth,
Which is that hidden in the mortal frame
There is a Splendour, blissful, calm and bright,
Not bound by time, devoid of form and name,
Which keeps the Flame of Life in us alight.
This Wonder of Creation we cannot
Imagine nor describe nor paint nor draw
For here we reach the end of human thought,
The point where scholars line up with the raw.

These are the alternatives to choose from :
Either cremation in a nuclear storm,
And for the injured torment to the end,
A bleak and blasted world in which to spend
One's life, all comfort, joy and rest denied ;
Or to renounce hate, prejudice and pride,
Excess, immoderation, greed and lust
For power, to foster mutual love and trust,

In tune with Faith's decrees and Laws of God,
To foot the same Path which the Enlightened trod.

Our progress on the Path of Truth involves
Greater concern for others' woe and weal,
Because the more the human mind evolves
The more it oneness with the rest should feel.
This is the reason why the Enlightened Mind
Has shown this noble trait throughout the past :
True Love and deep Concern for all mankind
With selfless zeal for Service to the last.

That is how nature regulates the Play
Of Life, as she ordains the eves and morns,
Some come, with bleeding hands, to sweep away
What some have sown and scattered – pins and thorns.

Remember, Life can be a fairy tale,
A dancing sunbeam when it bathes in light
Some charming landscape, a blooming hill or dale,
And makes all that it touches alive and bright,
If for a fraction of the time we spend
In idle gossip, fun or vain pursuit,
We pray to Heaven a helping hand to lend
To those in pain, distress or want acute,
To see their pain and grief or to destroy
Their fear until the ebbing strength revives.

This highly gifted being is not born
To work himself to death for earthly things,
But to irradiate, like the sun at morn,
The Light of Love which Cheer and Warmth brings.
What, after all, is thoughtful man here for ?
To toil and sweat for wealth or seats of power ?
And lose them both at death or in a war,
Living in dread of this to the last hour ?

There is enough provision, talent, wealth
To keep the race in plenty and in peace,
If Greed and Lust for Power by trick or stealth
Did not the Artless of these treasures fleece.
A warring mankind cannot co-exist
With modern weapons; one of them must cease :
Either complete ban on the Iron Fist
Or One World-Order, for which labour pleas.

Contentment, truth, compassion, love and peace
Are more necessary for the health of brain,

Than all the fabulous wealth of Rome and Greece,
To keep evolving mankind safe and sane.
Excessive lust, ambition, passion, greed
For earthly goods or power or carnal feasts,
Can warp and twist the tender human seed,
And change the Angels to be into beasts.

Allowed to wallow longer in the mire
Of reckless pleasure, craze for power and gold,
Mankind one day consumed in nuclear fire
Might cease—her story but a legend old.
The tragedy is that our leading minds,
Regardless of the crisis we are in,
Engrossed in their ambitious dreams of kinds,
Know not that we against our future sin.

This is why Revelation came to warn
Mankind, in time, to moderate her lust,
But treating Faith as a fictitious yarn
Science this crisis on the race has thrust.

Next two eventful decades will unfold
An awe-inspiring Drama, staged by Fate,
To end the present order, as foretold,
With Fires of War lit by greed, power-lust, hate.

When dust has settled on the fiery scene,
Then on the ashes of the past would rise
A One-World State built on the Golden Mean
To make Man happy, healthy, peaceful, wise.

That air-befouling, earth-polluting ware
Upon which Greed's ambitious empire stands,
Replaced by safer types, with thought and care,
Will pass from wasteful into thrifty hands.
In every civilization of the past
The storm came, when to Pleasure, Rank or Gold
The Rich and Powerful, hungry to the last,
Like children mad for toys, their soul had sold.
The High and Mighty of our day, again,
Do what their counterparts did in the past,
And hostile to the still evolving brain,
Wait for their exit, too, the atomic blast.

(ii)

Unlike the men of learning, I do not
Depend on effort for creative thought,

Or on the opinions of great men to find
Support for the new thought born in my mind.
A formless Presence, infinitely wise,
An Ocean of Thought from which insights rise,
A Grace unbounded and Compassion deep,
Permit me many a time to have a peep
At a stupendous Something which no mind
That found access to it has e'er defined.
And born of firm conviction that cannot
Be had from aught conceived by mortal thought.
Or aught observed by eye or heard by ear,
But far more clear and intimately near,
I write these verses, like a pupil taught
By silent whispers coming out of naught.

And Ah! the glorious realm in which I live,
Transporting, elevating, always new,
Beyond the horizon of my hopes and dreams,
All our philosophies and clever streams
Of thought, beyond conception, knowledge, guess,
That cannot be imagined more or less,
As foreign to the normal human mind
As sunlight is to one from birth blind,
Or sugar to a man devoid of taste,
Or rapture of love to a virgin chaste:
A state of consciousness as far removed
From our conceptions though hard to be proved,
As light from darkness, summit from the base;
The future common asset of the race,
Towards which with slow, halting steps our brains
Are working their way up pulled back by chains
Which, due to ignorance, we often forge,
When we ourselves with earthly dainties gorge.

The difficulty, faced by ancient seers
To bring conviction home to their compeers,
Crops up as people can not see the way
How this mysterious soul-uplifting ray
Of Cosmic Consciousness can bring about
So marvellous a change, remove all doubt
About Divinity, transform a man
Into a gifted seer, with power to scan
The complex problems which confront mankind,
At times too mixed up for a normal mind;
But clear as crystal to an illumined sage,
Ordned to expose the errors of his age.

The flash of great discoveries, matchless skill,
The gift of poesy, not gained at will,
And inspiration of great authors rise
From depths of consciousness, where genius lies,
Thence come the moods and visions that create
New gems of thought and masterpieces great
Of science, art, and literature which
Have made mankind so cultured, wise and rich.

The fire that has transformed the face of earth
From man's cortical matter ne'er took birth;
But comes, by Grace, from regions far away
Where mortal lusts and passions hold no sway,
Where Sovereign Consciousness in state abides,
And in the appointed manner mankind guides
With vision, insight, flash of thought or trance
Which scholars wrongly attribute to chance.

The blooming garden of creative thought
In man, which has such sweeping changes wrought,
That from a helpless, weak, impoverished state
He touched the peak of progress in a spate
Of great discoveries that had lain concealed
In mortal mind for long to be unsealed,
By Chosen Vessels, only at the time
And place ordained before by Laws Sublime,
And who can say what other priceless gems
Still lie uncovered to become the stems
For e'en more precious buds of thought and skill
To raise evolving mankind higher still.

From war to peace, barbarism to the height
Of culture, to ideals and visions bright,
Man is ascending step by step without
The least idea what all this is about,
Why this bewildering life, why peace and war,
Why love and hate and why these problems bar
The understanding of what brought him here
To think and wonder, to run here and there
To meet his pressing needs, to have a weight
Around his neck, tied hard by cruel Fate.

These hard, unanswered Riddles from the dawn
Of reason many vainly brooded on,
To leave as mystified as when they came,
Including wise men of great name and fame,
All working, sleeping, loving, hating in

Their own peculiar way to lose or win,
To pass the round of day, night, eve and morn,
And leave as empty-handed as when born.
The sweating labour done through all their life,
The daily chores, the struggles and the strife,
All fading, like an ended dream at morn,
With the last breath of every mortal born,
A dancing bubble on the ocean's face,
Lost in immensities of time and space.

All this alarm of war and threat of guns,
Of frightful missiles and dread megatons
Is nature's warning of a faulty trend
Which makes material goals the aim and end
Of life, for man comes not to act a farce,
To be a well-fed, brightly harnessed horse,
Who makes his round of duties with his eyes
Only half open to the earth and skies,
Oblivious to his glorious Destiny,
From what he is now what he has to be.

Man does not know that he has woken up
To earthly life to sip the ambrosial cup
Of Life Sublime, to realize that he,
Free from the earth belongs to Eternity:
The Cream of Earth, the bright Immortal Spark,
The priceless Gem of Life, lost in the dark
Of ignorance, the Glory of the Sun
And Stars, the countless host contained in One.

The Fragment and the Whole, of all the Known,
The Knower in his majesty alone;
The Ocean, all surpassing, e'er supreme
Of Cosmic Consciousness a Deathless Beam
That has to know itself to rise above
The lower passions, high in Truth and Love,
And building on this earth a Paradise,
In ecstasy to roam the boundless skies;
And drawn in oneness with all that exists,
Released from mental clouds and sensual mists,
To taste the bliss of rapturous union with
The Fount of Life—the Eternal Ground beneath
The massive Cosmos of effect and cause,
Which melts away, as if it never was!

The End

Author Index : Who is who

ABDULLAH, Janab Sheikh Mohammed, Srinagar, M. Sc., LLB. Chief Minister of J. & K. State, Leader of Kashmiri masses, known popularly as Sher-i-Kashmir ; a veteran politician of international repute. Has unique contribution towards political awakening of Kashmiris and its freedom movement, Secularism, growth and development of Kashmir and Kashmiri masses and as an administrator.

AHMED, Nisar, Srinagar. Journalist and writer. Contributes articles to local papers in Kashmir and Jammu.

BHATT, Justice, J. N. (Retd.), Jammu, M. A., LLB., brilliant educational career, gold medalist, retired Judge of J & K. High Court ; M. L. A. in past, presently Chairman of the State Pay Commission Associated with many Commissions and Trusts, educational and cultural societies in Kashmir and outside.

BHATT. Ramesh Chandra, Jammu. A distinguished Higher Secondary Student, writes articles, is a debator of repute and participates in Radio Kashmir programmes in Jammu.

CHAKU, (Prof.) P. N., Jammu. Triple M. A. Brilliant academic career ; retired I. A. S. Originally Professor of Economics and pioneer of Cooperative Consumer Movement in Srinagar. Was Secretary of Planning Department and Financial Commissioner of J & K State. Wields a facile pen and has a gift of gab. Presently an authority on Economic Problems of Kashmir.

DHAR, (Mrs.) Asha ; New Delhi. M. A., Diploma in Journalism (London). Writes on tourism, women, and current topics as a free lance journalist. Author of : FOLK TALES OF IRAN, FOLK TALES OF AFGHANISTAN, in Sterling Publishers World Folk Tales Series, RAJA RANI STORIES (in press, Thomas Press India Ltd. New Delhi) Teaches tourism at International Polytechnic for women, New Delhi and in Delhi University.

DHAR, (Prof.), Somnath, New Delhi, M. A., LLB., B. T., MIRP (London). Started career as a lecturer, retired as Foreign Service Executive. Presently a visiting Professor in Tourism at the Universities of Delhi and Garhwal. Has written five books on Kashmir and its folklore among which JAMMU & KASHMIR (National Book Trust, India, 1977) is being reprinted. His KALHANA (Sahitya Akadamy 1978) has been printed also in Hindi and Tamil. His forthcoming books HISTORICAL TALES OF KASHMIR, KAUTILYA and ARTHASASTRA are in press.

FOTIDAR, Amar Nath, Srinagar. M. Sc. post graduate work at Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi and at Indian Forest College, Dehradun. I. F. S. (1965) having retired from J & K State Forest Service in 1975. Brilliant academic record. Has a number of publications on forestry and allied subjects. Closely associated with Rama-Krishna Mission.

GANHAR, J. N. Srinagar. M. A., ex-C. I. S. former Director of News, Radio Kashmiri Author of BUDHISM IN KASHMIR & LADAKH, JAMMU : SHRINES & PILGRIMAGES, THE WILDLIFE OF LADAKH, SHANKARACHARYA TEMPLE, KHIRBHAVANI : THE SHRINE SUPREME. Editor : The

Kashmir Herald, Srinagar, Chief Editor, Kashmir Council of Research. Recipient of 3 gold medals for all round excellence during academic career.

HANDU, A. K., Calcutta. Graduate ; Manager of Kashmir Art Emporium, Calcutta, Versatile in the field of Management and an expert in the marketing of Kashmiri handicrafts.

KACHRU, Daya Krishan ; New Delhi. B. A. (Hons.) I. A. S. (retd.). Brilliant and distinguished academic record, recipient of merit awards and gold medals. Started career in 1934, as Private Secretary to Nawab Sir Khizar Hayat Khan (Ex Premier, Punjab), joined Kashmir Secretariat in 1936 on different positions. Shifted in 1948 to Cuttack and served on very Senior administrative positions in Government of Orissa and Govt. of India. Retired in 1975 as Resident Representative, NMDC at New Delhi. A veteran administrator. prolific writer and eloquent speaker.

Kak, Lt. Col. Prem Nath (Retd.) ; President of Kashmir Sabha, Calcutta and an ardent member of our community. Achieved a commendable distinction during invasion of Kashmir in October, 1947 by serving as Chief Liaison officer between J & K Forces, J & K Govt. and the Indian Army and for his role as the there Station Commander of Srinagar. Presently a Senior Executive of premier Tata Organisation—TELCO, having been previously associated, for seven years, with Indian Iron & Steel Co. Burnpur as its administrator. Col. Kak is well known in India & abroad for his wide range of Social Service & has been a Trustee of the Cheshire Home, India for last 22 years.

KAUL, D. N., Srinagar. B. A. (Hons.), M. A. Distinguished academic record, started career as lecturer in Srinagar and later joined Kashmir Police Service. Served Border Security Force at Delhi for six years and was awarded President's Medal for distinguished services. Retired from Kashmir Govt. Service as the Inspector General of Police. A voracious reader, prolific writer and eloquent speaker. Has been giving literary talks from Radio Kashmir and Door Darshan. Has a number of publications to his credit.

KAUL, Shyam, Jammu (Editor, regrets for not including details since Bio-data not received)

KAUL, Triloki Nath ; Srinagar. M. A. journalism. A prominent social worker and freelance writer.

KAUL, Z. L., New Delhi, M..A. LLB. Started his career in Kashmir Bar and practised law. Joined Kashmir Radio in 1947 and changed over to Ministry of External Affairs in 1954 and served Indian Mission in Pakistan, Egypt, U. S. A., Japan and the Middle East. Retired as Director, Press relations of External Affairs Ministry. After his retirement he has taken to journalism and is a special correspondent of foreign papers and weekly, 'New Wave', New Delhi.

KRISHNA, Gopi ; Srinagar. Born in 1903, Shri Gopi Krishna joined Education Department of Kashmir after schooling at Srinagar in 1937. After 17 years of meditation he unexpectedly experienced the awakening of the Kundalini and subsequent severe ordeals which few have survived. He founded the research Foundation for Kundalini which has branches in Europe and America. He has written around fifteen books of international circulation on, Kundalini, Yoga. Higher consciousness and other philosophic topics. Presently he is recognised as a philosopher of international repute having his disciples in various parts of the world. Devotes most of his time abroad with his research centres.

MOZA, (Dr.) Brij Krishen ; Calcutta, M. Pharm., Ph. D. (Prague), F. I. C., a pharmaceutical technologist having a long research background in pharmaceutical chemistry and R & D Management. Has travelled widely in India and abroad and has been associated with many professional organisations as an office bearer or Editorial Committee member. Has more than forty original research

publications, published in Indian and foreign journals and has to his credit discovery of a dozen new natural chemical compounds and processes and doctoral theses. Presently a Manager of Rallis India, Pharm. Division.

MOZA, (Miss) Meenakshi, New Delhi, M. Phil. After securing first class first position in M. A. in Political Science and second position in Humanities of Jammu University in 1978, Miss Moza was recipient of a UGC post graduate merit scholarship at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi where she completed her M. Phil. thesis on Politics of land Reforms in J & K State. She is presently continuing her researches for Doctorate Degree at JNU on Agrarian Relations in Kashmir. She has been a distinguished student and gold medalist. She is the daughter of Prof. T. N. Moza of Jammu University.

MOZA, (Mrs.) Veera, N. Delhi. Graduate of Delhi University, Born and brought up in Delhi, Mrs. Moza is presently a Senior Executive in State Bank of India. She is a social worker and is actively associated with the feminist movement in Delhi. She is the daughter-in-law of Prof. T. N. Moza of Jammu University.

ORGA, Mohan Kishen, Calcutta. After graduation from Kashmir and receiving Diploma in Statistics from Indian Institute of Statistics, Calcutta, Mr. Ogra has been associated with National Insulated Cable Company, Calcutta for a long time. He is presently the Commercial Manager of this Company. An experienced and trained Management Executive, Mr. Ogra is equally known in Biradari circles as a founder member of Kashmir Sabha, Calcutta.

PIR, S. L., Srinagar. M. A. Started career as a member of Information Department of J & K Government and served as the Editor of the Kashmir Today. Mr. Pir is a free lance journalist distinguished for his contributions to various periodicals on varied aspects of social and cultural life of Kashmir. He has been associated with Kashmir freedom movement.

RAINA (Prof.) A. N., New Delhi. Double M. A., Ph. D. Served as a Professor in J & K State, Indian Military Academy, Dehra Dun, as the Principal, Binani College, Mirzapur and Project Consultant Jawaharlal Nehru University ; New Delhi. Is a prolific writer of prose and poetry in English, Hindi, Urdu, Kashmir and Persian. Has to his credit a number of books in these languages of which 'KESAR KE PHOOL', won National Award in 1974. He is an authority on geography and history of Kashmir and on anthology of Kashmiri poets having written at length on the poetry of Master Zinda Kaul and Ghani Kashmiri. Presently he is writing on Mysticism in Kashmir and on Cultural synthesis in Kashmir.

RAINA, Kumar Jee ; Srinagar. M. A., free lance journalist, contributes thoughtful articles to the Kashmir Today.

SADHU ; (Prof.) A. N. Jammu. M. A. from Delhi School of Economics and Ph. D. from Louvain University, Belgium. Dr. Sadhu is presently a reader in Economics of Jammu University conducting doctorate researches in his subject. Has already a dozen of publications and articles in different journals and has several books to his credit.

SINGH, (Dr.) Amarjit, Jammu. M. A., Ph. D. A domicile of Himachal Pradesh, Dr. Singh has been associated with University of Jammu for last two decades. He is a research guide for post graduate classes in Economics of Jammu University. Has a large number of research papers and four books to his credit.

Report On The Second All India Kashmeri Samaj Conference.

By SANJAY KAUL

The Second All India Kashmeri Samaj Conference was held in Calcutta for two days i.e. 27th and 28th December, 1980. The meeting was called to order by Justice P. N. Bakshi, President All India Kashmeri Samaj (A. I. K. S.), elected at First All India Kashmeri Samaj Conference held at Allahabad.

SATURDAY, 27TH DECEMBER, 1980

The proceedings began with a Bhajan by Shri Kalyan Chaudhury and his Group, and the local Kashmeri talent invoking the blessing of the Goddess.

The welcome address was given by Lt. Col. Prem Nath Kak (retd.), President, Kashmeri Sabha, Calcutta. He emphasised on the Socio-Economic problems of the community like unemployment, dowry system and also suggested that ways should be found for improving the quality of life for the betterment and progress of the community at large.

Mr. Justice P. N. Bakshi, President A. I. K. S. addressed the delegates, reporting on the progress of the Samaj. Delegates to the conference were glad to hear that the Samaj in its short life of 8-9 months had been able to render very useful service to the community in the shape of employment to several young people and had also helped in successful negotiation and settlement of several marriages. I must add that, to provide such useful service, in such a short life of the Samaj is in itself a remarkable achievement. Justice Bakshi, rightly pointed out that an invisible and artificial barrier is existing between the Old and New Kashmeries resulting in non-cohesion of the community. This artificial barrier must be completely eradicated. He further stressed the need for making known the Kashmeri language to the Non-Kashmeri speaking people, so that the Non-Kashmeri speaking people can easily identify themselves with the rest of the Community. He very rightly stressed the point that when two or more persons meet at a place, one should try to speak in a language which everybody can understand and so none feels lost. However, language should not be an obstacle in the consolidation of the community.

The speech of Justice Bakshi was followed by the inaugural address of the Chief Guest Shri M. L. Zutshi who was formally introduced to the delegates by Shri P. L. Dhar, Secretary of Kashmeri Sabha, Calcutta who was also the Co-ordinator of the Second All India Kashmeri Samaj Conference. The inaugural address of Shri Zutshi was highly interesting, thought provoking and a memorable one. Mr. Zutshi in his elaborate speech provided the delegates with some very interesting data about the history of Kashmir; stating that the history of Kashmir had been recorded by Kalhan Pandit around

2450 B. C. He also stated some facts about the different rulers of Kashmere and the contribution of the Kashmeri Community in different spheres of life. His astute observation that the Kashmeries, who have lost contact with the valley are under the misconception that remaining Kashmeri Pandits by and large make good cooks only, was, though amusing and interesting but saddening.

In the afternoon session there was a brief introduction of the affiliated bodies of the A. I. K. S. The office bearers and delegates from various Sabhas gave a brief account of their activities over the past years. The names of various Sabhas from which the delegates were present are Bombay, Amritsar, Allahabad, Agra, Calcutta, Chandigarh, Dehra Dun, Jodhpur, Kanpur, Lucknow, Moradabad, Srinagar, Vishakapatnam and Varanasi. All the speakers from various Sabhas gave a strong impression that the members of those Sabhas were very enthusiastic in their activities and one could look forward to the future with confidence and hope.

A notable highlight was the activity of Kashmiri Sabha, Amritsar who have built up assets worth a Crore of rupees over the past thirty years and who have placed the entire resources at the disposal of the A. I. K. S. They deserve to be congratulated on such a laudable and selfless effort and devotion to the up lift of Kashmiri Community.

SUNDAY, 28TH DECEMBER, 1980

Sunday was a very eventful day as some very important and fruitful discussions took place and out of which bloomed some very important Resolutions which were adopted after thorough discussion. The various resolutions are summarised briefly as follows :

- 1) The draft Constitution was adopted.
- 2) Justice Bakshi was elected President of A. I. K. S. unanimously.
- 3) It was decided to print an All India Directory of members as soon as possible which would be available at a price.
- 4) The offer of Devasthan Suraksha Samiti, Srinagar, to supply copies of Kashmeri manuscript reported to be prepared by Prof. Pushp and printed by them was accepted. All the units of A. I. K. S. were advised to propagate the use of Kashmeri language.
- 5) Prof. L. N. Kaula of Kashmeri Samaj, Varanasi was requested to continue his efforts to revive Dastoor—Amal.
- 6) Mrs. Chak of Kashmiri Samaj, Allahabad was requested to provide a format with regard to settlement of marriages for circulation amongst all the member units of A. I. K. S.
- 7) Mr. Purbi's offer to devote a page of his weekly paper for the service of the Samaj was accepted.
- 8) The affiliated units were advised to exchange their news for publication in official organs of various affiliated Samajs.
- 9) It was decided to publish a Quartely Bulletin from Head-office of A. I. K. S. which shall be its official organ.

- 10) The affiliated units were requested to collect addresses of Kashmiries residing abroad and inform the Head-office for their enrolment as overseas members.
- 11) It was resolved that artificial distinctions in the Biradari be abolished for greater integration and cohesion among the brothers/sisters of the Biradari.
- 12) All the Samajs were requested to elect ladies representative in their Executive Committees.
- 13) All the Samajs were requested to create Youth Wing and Mahila Mandal Wing in their respective units.
- 14) Efforts were to be made to promote exchange of Cultural delegations between the different affiliated units of A. I. K. S.
- 15) The offer of the Kashmiri Pandits Association, Bombay to hold the 3rd Annual Conference of the A. I. K. S. at Bombay was accepted.

The efficient, disciplined, judicial and parliamentary conduction of the proceedings at the convention by Hon. Mr. Justice Bakshi was highly laudable and greatly appreciated by all present.

In the afternoon the host Sabha of Calcutta had organised a boat trip across the Hoogly river in a big motor launch. The trip took several hours, extending from Dakshineswar temple in the north to the Botanical Gardens in the South. Lunch and tea were served on the launch. Some of the participants also regaled the others by songs and dance items which were enjoyed by all the participants.

Delegates to the Conference started arriving in Calcutta from 26th morning. Volunteers received them at the Howrah and Sealdah Railway Station and conducted them to their place of residence at Club House of Bengal Jute Mills, where arrangement for their stay and food upto morning of 29th December had been made in advance. Some delegates extended their stay in the City till the New Year. Arrangements were made for their stay as per their convenience and requirement.

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE GENERAL BODY MEETING OF ALL INDIA KASHMIRI SAMAJ HELD AT THE BHARTIYA BHASHA PARISHAD AUDITORIUM, 36, SHAKESPEARE SARANI, CALCUTTA-17 ON 27th & 28th DECEMBER, 1980.

1. RESOLVED that the draft Constitution of the All India Kashmiri Samaj presented today the 27th December, 1980, be and is hereby adopted unanimously.

Proposed by : Pt. Motilal Zutshi,

Seconded by L : Lt. Col. P. N. Kak (Retd.)

2. RESOLVED that Mr. Justice P. N. Bakshi be and is hereby elected President of All India Kashmiri Samaj unanimously.

Proposed by Dr. K. N. Kaul,

Seconded by : Mr. P. L. Dhar,

3. RESOLVED that pursuant to Resolution No. 6 passed in the 1st. Conference of All India Kashmiri Samaj at Allahabad, a Directory of members be published as soon as possible and member units be advised to send in their list of members immediately, but not later than 1st. March '81.

Proposed by ; Prof. L. N. Kaula,

Seconded by : Mr. C. Kaul,

4. RESOLVED further that member units be also advised to prepare a list of Baradari members for inclusion in a supplementary directory at a later stage.

Proposed by : Prof. L. N. Kaula,

Seconded by : Mr. C. Kaul,

5. RESOLVED that all India directory of members be made available on payment.

Proposed by : Prof. L. N. Kaula,

Seconded by : Mr. C. Kaula,

6. RESOLVED further that after receiving the complete list of members from the units, the kind offer of Mr. Purbi of Kashmiri Samaj, Moradabad, to print the same free of cost be accepted and the kind offer of Kashmir Pandits Association, Bombay, made by Dr. K. N. Kaul to provide paper for this purpose at mill rates for which the Kind assistance will be given by Shri M. L. Zutshi of Kashmir Sabha, Calcutta, be accepted.

Proposed by : Dr. K. N. Kaul,

Seconded by : Mr. M. L. Kaul,

7. RESOLVED that the kind offer of Shri A. N. Ganjoo of Devasthan Suraksha Samiti, Srinagar, to supply copies of Kashmiri manuscript reported to be prepared by Prof. Pushak and printed by the Devasthan Suraksha Samiti, Srinagar, be accepted and the local units be advised to propagate the use of Kashmiri language.

Proposed by : Shri A. N. Ganjoo.
Seconded by : Shri P. L. Dhar.

8. RESOLVED further that Prof. L. N. Kaula of Kashmiri Samaj, Varanasi, be requested to continue his efforts to revise Dastoor-Amal and to report on the same to the President as early as possible.

Proposed by : Dr. K. N. Kaul,
Seconded by : Lt. Col. P. N. Kak

9. RESOLVED that Mrs. Chak of Kashmiri Samaj, Allahabad, be requested to provide a format with regard to settlement of marriages for circulation amongst all the affiliated units with a request to send their proposals to the Headquarters for necessary action.

Proposed by : Shri M. L. Zutshi,
Seconded by : Shri R. N. Munshi,

10. RESOLVED that the kind offer of Mr. Purbi to devote a page of his weekly paper JAN PRAGATI for the service of the Samaj be accepted and the affiliated units be requested to send their news to Mr. Purbi for publication in the said Weekly. They may also, if they so desire, place orders for this Weekly being supplied to their local units.

Proposed by : Mr. K. Purbi,
Seconded by : Dr. K. N. Kaul,

11. RESOLVED that the affiliated units may also be advised to exchange their news inter-see for publication in official organs of various affiliated Samajs, viz., Vitasta (Calcutta), Abhinavgupt (Srinagar), Heemal (Lucknow), Milchar (Bombay), Sundervani (Chandigarh), Chinarika (Allahabad) and Koshur-Samachar (Delhi)

Proposed by : Dr. B. K. Moza,
Seconded by : Mr. P. L. Dhar,

12. RESOLVED that a bulletin (Magazine) be published quarterly, if possible, by the Headquarters of All India Kashmiri Samaj at Allahabad, which shall be the official publication of A. I. K. S.

Proposed by : Lt. Col. P. N. Kak,
Seconded by : Dr. B. K. Moza.

13. RESOLVED that the Presidents of affiliated Samajs be requested to make every possible effort to collect the addresses of Kashmiris residing in foreign countries and to transmit the same to Headquarters for enrolment as overseas members of the AIKS and for inclusion of their names in the overseas directory.

Proposed by : Mr. M. K. Ogra,
Seconded by : Dr. B. K. Moza,

14. RESOLVED further that Shri B. L. Razdan and Dr. K. N. Kaul be requested and authorised to get into personal contact with the prospective overseas members so as to accelerate the pace of their enrolment.

Proposed by : M. K. Ogra,
Seconded by : Dr. B. K. Moza,

15. RESOLVED that in view of various artificial distinctions in the Biradari due to professional or other reasons, the distinctions be abolished to forge greater integration and cohesion among the brothers/sisters of the Biradari.

Proposed by : Mr. R. P. Mattoo,
Seconded by : Mr. Kachroo

16. RESOLVED that all Samajs/Associations be requested to keep sufficient representation for Ladies in their Executive Committees.

Proposed by : Prof. L. N. Kaula
Seconded by : Mr. C. Kaul,

17. RESOLVED that all Samajs/Associations be requested to create a Youth Wing/Mahila Mandal Wing in their respective units

Proposed by : Prof. Mr. L. N. Kaula,
Seconded by Mr. C Kaul,

18. RESOLVED that efforts be made to promote exchange of cultural delegations between the different affiliated units of the A. I. K. S.

Proposed by : Prof. L. N. Kaula,
Seconded by : Mr. C. Kaul.

19. RESOLVED that the kind offer of Dr. K. N. Kaul of the Kashmiri Pandits Association, Bombay, to hold the 3rd. annual Conference of the A. I. K. S. at Bombay be accepted subject to ratification of their Executive Committee.

Proposed by : Dr. K. N. Kaul,
Seconded by : Mr. P. L. Dhar,

20. RESOLVED that the ardent, sincere, selfless and dynamic leadership provided by the President of All India Kashmiri Samaj, Mr. Justice P. N. Bakshi be and is hereby greatly appreciated, and his hands be strengthened to achieve the objectives of the AIKS by all affiliated Samajs.

Proposed by : Mr. P. L. Dhar,
Seconded by ; Mr. B. L. Razdan.

Welcome Address

BY LT. COL. P. N. KAK (RETD.) PRESIDENT, KASHMIR SABHA
CALCUTTA, AT II A-I KASHMIRI SAMAJ CONFERENCE
CALCUTTA DATED 27TH/28TH DEC., 1980

It gives me great pleasure as President of Kashmir Sabha Calcutta to extend a warm welcome to all of you ladies and gentlemen who have taken the trouble to come all the way to attend the Second All India Kashmiri Samaj Conference, which our Sabha has the privilege to host this year. I hope your stay would be as comfortable as can be made in these hard days and that the Conference deliberations would be of value.

I have also great pleasure in extending a very warm welcome to Pandit Motilal Zutshi, the Chief Guest who would be later introduced to you formally by our Honorary Secretary. We are greatly honoured to have Mr. Justice P. N. Bakshi, President of the All-India Kashmiri Samaj along with Mrs. Bakshi to preside over this Conference. The community would owe him a deep debt of gratitude for the initiative he has taken to lead us to our cohesion as an All-India Body. His leadership is sure to guide and inspire us.

We also feel proud to have here with us Smt. Kanta Bhan and Smt. Subhadra Haksar who are great supporters of our community. I extend to them a very special hearty welcome.

You all know that the Samaj is meant to ponder over socio-economic and other problems of the community and to find ways and means to improve the quality of life of our community. Some of these problems are definitely standing in the way of our progress and if I may be permitted to say in certain aspects we fall far short of the standard expected of us as individuals and as a community. We are very fortunate in having Justice Bakshi as the 1st President of this All India Body and his ardent love and affection for the community is sure to guide us for a successful end of the year programme.

May God make it the beginning of a movement for the good of us all—of a community that needs cohesion, a lot of re-thinking and some urgent reforms. There is heaven knows great and greatly under-used talent in this small and scattered community.

Finally, let me hope you would carry back happy memories of your participation and stay with us during the deliberations of these two days.

**INTRODUCTION OF CHIEF GUEST, SHRI M. L. ZUTSHI, BY MR. P. L. DHAR,
SECY., KASHMIR SABHA, CALCUTTA, AT ALL INDIA KASHMIRI SAMAJ
CONFERENCE AT CALCUTTA ON 27-12-1980.**

Pandit Moti Lal Zutshi is one of the past Presidents of the Kashmir Sabha, Calcutta. In early seventies he also served the Kashmir Sabha of Delhi as its President. Pt. Motilalji has been, except for the period 1970-76, a member of the Committee of the Kashmir Sabha, Calcutta. He has been one of the active and strong supporters of this Sabha.

Pt. Motilalji is very well known in the paper industry of the country. He has been acknowledged as the leader of this Industry both by the Industry and the Government. He was several times elected as the Chairman of the Paper Makers Association. The Government of India nominated him repeatedly as the Chairman of the Development Council for Paper, Pulp and Allied Industries. In fact he has been the leading light of this Council, since its inception two decades ago. It was under his leadership that the Council formulated various measures for fighting the paper famine faced by the country during the period 1972-76. Pt. Motilalji is internationally known in the world of Paper Industry. Seven years ago he was appointed as a member of the Advisory Committee on Pulp & Paper of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. It goes to his credit that this Committee which was concerning itself chiefly with the problems of the North American and European mills started devoting its time and attention to the problems of the developing and under developed countries.

Pt. Motilalji spent the major part of his active career with the Thapar Organisation. He was appointed by the Government of India as the Chairman-cum-Managing Director of Hindustan Paper Corporation in Jan. '74. He completed his assignment in Jan'79.

Although Pt. Motilalji has retired from active service, he continues to be associated with the Industry and is now on the Board of Directors of several Companies. He is also advising both large and small mills.

Presidential Address

By

**MR. JUSTICE P. N. BAKSHI AT THE SECOND ALL
INDIA KASHMIRI SAMAJ CONFERENCE HELD IN
CALCUTTA ON 27TH & 28TH DECEMBER, 1980**

Honoured Chief Guest, Lt. Col, Kak, President of the Local Kashmiri Samaj, Members on the dias, fellow delegates, Ladies & Gentlemen.

I am extremely happy to be present here this morning amidst my fellow brethren from all parts of the country. As you know we have been scattered all over during the last 50 years and even though we are now in the farthest corners of the country, I do feel that we are losing track of each other as a result of which there appears to be no cohesion, no harmony and no co-operation between each one of us. It was this idea which was mooted out by the Kashmiri Samaj of Allahabad and more strictly speaking which originated in Bombay through my revered late cousin Shri Sham Sunder Nath Sopori which we caught hold of and worked upon early this year in the month of March since we organised our first Conference in Allahabad. Before I speak to you about what we have done in the last nine months and what we wish to do in future, let me at the outset thank from the bottom of my heart the Kashmir Sabha Calcutta, Col. Kak, Mr. Dhar, Mr. Razdan and each and every member of the Managing Committee who have been so kind, so considerate as to make almost an unimaginable comfortable arrangement for me, as well as all the delegates that have come here. They have set up a standard which might be even difficult for the successors to emulate, but I am happy at the potentiality which this local Samaj has exhibited. When we called the first meeting of the Samaj in Allahabad it was just a haphazard affair, first we invited the provincial Samajs, the response was encouraging, and therefore we took the courage to invite other Samajs of whom we could get the addresses. Thirteen Samajs were represented at the last conference at Allahabad. During the span of last 9 months, I am really happy to inform you, that we have grown and today we have 22 Samajs affiliated with the All India Kashmiri Samaj. We have added 9 Samajs in 9 months. Five are absolutely new which have been born at Patiala, at Ahmedabad, at Hyderabad at Moradabad and Jodhpur. The most recent addition is Moradabad about 15 days back and Jodhpur about 3 weeks back. The other four were asleep, they were in slumber, they have been rejuvenated and asked to join us and actively participate. The position therefore is that today we have 22 active Samajs doing the work for our community who are represented in this meeting. We have also tried to expand the activities of the Samaj outside our country, because we do not want to limit our activities in any manner whatsoever and our objectives are ultimately to have an International Association of Kashmiris.

We have at present enrolled Mr. Ganjoo from London and Mr. Prabhat Hukku from Liberia and one more member from New York whose letter I was expecting but have not yet received but it might have reached Allahabad already. So on the roll we have two overseas members Dr. K. N. Kaul and

Mr. B. L. Razdan have promised me yesterday that in their numerous trips to foreign countries they will try to expand our activities and enrol more and more overseas members of the All India Kashmiri Samaj.

On the social side, we have taken up three projects. The first project was trying to help young men in getting employment. I have been receiving applications from Srinagar, from Jammu, from Delhi, the capital itself, and from Agra, wanting assistance in securing employment. These applications have been forwarded to the various centres with the request for help and I dare say that through our efforts some of the unemployed or unsatisfactorily employed, have been employed during the course of the year. They are few in number, but the start has been made and we shall try to develop this project.

The other aspect which we are trying to develop is the assistance given to various Samajs and individuals in setting marriages. We have opened a Marriage Bureau at Allahabad and I understand the same work is being done here at Calcutta also. We have been receiving numerous applications and our Chairman of the marriage bureau is Mrs. Kamla Chak who is present here in person. She is preparing a register and we shall co-ordinate our activities and then give the various references to the willing parties so that they can negotiate. In this manner we have also succeeded in settling a couple of marriages. This aspect will also be developed that I have no doubt that success will be with us.

The third aspect which we have taken up and in respect of which a resolution had also been passed in the last conference was, fight against the dowry system. This is a very pernicious evil which is very rampant and appears to grow with a greater speed than it can be suppressed. I had also the occasion of personally addressing few of our Samajs at different places in which this topic was touched and since yesterday that I am here we have been discussing this matter again and again with the various members we have come across and especially the member of the Calcutta Sabha. It is a very knotty problem but it has got to be tackled and we do hope that in times to come we will tackle this problem psychologically because I feel that a psychological approach is more important in this case than any other. However, we will take that matter up in our business session and we will discuss it further, and to devise ways and means to deal with this question.

Now, apart from this report which I have given regarding the progress of the association, I would like to mention one or two matters which have struck us because I feel it is necessary to exchange ideas on those topics. One of them is that there seems to be a very artificial distinction between the Kashmiri speaking Kashmiris coming from Kashmir and the non-Kashmiri speaking Kashmiris who have already migrated to this part of the country 300 years ago or may be 100 years ago. There appears to be an artificial barrier which does not permit assimilation of both these sections of our society. Numerous reasons have been given for this distinction. Some people say that when Kashmiri speaking Kashmiris come together they start speaking Kashmiri, with the result that we do not understand them, so if we go and join the association we are lost to follow the proceedings and mix with them because we do not know their language. Other say that certain sections are suffering from an inferiority complex. And third opinion is that certain sections are suffering from superiority complex. In this way innumerable reasons are given. Whether these reasons are correct or not is a matter for consideration. But I strongly feel that, whether we have migrated 100 years ago from Kashmiri or 50 years ago or 10 years ago, or today, it makes no difference at all, because we are the sons of the same land. This artificial barrier which is trying to

keep us away should be completely eradicated and there should be no such distinction. There should be a spirit of accommodation and tolerance. If somebody objects he cannot understand the Kashmiri language don't speak it. It is all right, we should learn the language, it's our own language. It's our mother tongue, and we are sorry we do not know it. I for one have volunteered to learn the Kashmiri language from any of my Kashmiri brethren who is living in Allahabad. I volunteered and told him to come to me every Sunday, have his lunch with me and teach me the Kashmiri language. So we want to learn it and if facilities are provided there is no reason why we should not pick it up, but the position that I can't speak it today should not be a barrier between you and me. Make me learn it and if I can't understand you, then don't speak it for the time being, speak a language by which I can understand you. So from both sides it has got to be a spirit of give and take, so that we can really understand each other in the proper spirit. I am sure if that is the procedure and the method by which we try to understand each other's difficulties, this artificial barrier will vanish and we will be able to come closer more and more.

The other question which has been agitating my mind and which I have felt, also requires mentioning is that we are ashamed of calling ourselves Kashmiris. I am very frank, I am very blunt, but I think bluntness and frankness is necessary. We are ashamed of saying we are going to attend a meeting of the Kashmiri Samaj. We are not ashamed of saying that we are going to attend a meeting of an International Association or a particular mission of a particular club. But we are ashamed of saying that we are going to attend a meeting of the Kashmiri Association. Why? Because there seems to be a misconception that if we say so, we will be called communalists, that we are communal minded, we don't think in the higher perspective, and therefore no communalism, no Kashmirism? And we must hide the fact that we are going to the meeting of the Kashmiri Samaj? When I am asked in my own city whether I organised or was I responsible for organising a Kashmiri Sabha in quarters which were rather high, I had no hesitation in saying yes, I did for the benefit of my community and my country. We have got in London, Welsh Association, Scotch Associations. I have been to London three times. Nobody in Britain says that a Welsh Association or a Scotch Association is a communal Association. Nobody says that a Welshman or a Scot is not a Britisher. Why should we think on narrow lines that because we are members of a Kashmiri Association we are not Indians? We are Indians, Indians first. We are Kashmiris cum Indians. There is no hostility, there is no conflict between the Kashmiri culture and the Indian culture. We have not formed this association to fight against Indian culture, we have not formed it to fight against our nationalistic activities. As a matter of fact, the object is to get the community which is scattered here and there together so that we can flow in a regular stream for the purpose of doing national good. That is the object of combining the entire community together so that we may flow in the same stream and we could say that the Kashmiri Association has discharged its national duty. That is our object, and that is how we help the country. We are entrolling Overseas members. These Overseas members are sending us Dollars, they are sending us Pounds, we are earning foreign exchange. What is this for? That is for the country. Therefore, you are earning foreign exchange. You are a serviceful community; a community that is earning foreign exchange for the Government, for the State. So we are serving the State and not doing any disservice to the State. We don't eliminate or exclude from our membership our girls and boys who have married outside the community. We assimilate them. If the boy is a Kashmiri it does not matter to which community the other spouse belongs. We have them as our members. We are assimilating them—cultural integration. How can one get an impression we are indulging in the anti-national activities? As a matter of fact, it is one of the most nationalistic activities to promote social and cultural integration. This is what we are doing. So, the objects with which our Samaj has been formed are wholly

nationalistic and I cannot see any reason why we should be shy of saying that we are members of the Kashmiri Samaj. These being our laudable objects, we are here to from the association to serve ourselves, to consolidate ourselves, for the service of our country. I would now close my speech with just two lines quoted from a famous Kashmiri poet of Lucknow, Pandit Brij Narain Chakbast :

गुरुर और जहल को बस दूर से सलाम करो
कुछ अपने कौम के वच्चों का इन्तजाम करो
यह बात याद रहे चाहे जान रहे या न रहे
जमीन रहे न रहे, आसमान रहे न रहे ।

Thank you

Inaugural Address

**OF PANDIT MOTILAL ZUTSHI AT IInd ALL INDIA KASHMIRI
SAMAJ CONFERENCE AT BHARTIYA BHASHA PARISHAD
AUDITORIUM, CALCUTTA, ON SATURDAY,
THE 27TH DECEMBER, 1980**

Mr. Justice Bakshi, Lt. Col. Kak, fellow delegates and ladies and gentlemen, we are meeting this morning, the morning of December 27th. In another four days the first year of the last two decades of this century will come to an end. May I wish you all a happy, a very happy New Year. I want to say how greatly I feel honoured to have been invited, a delegate as I am, to be the Chief Guest of the morning session. To this has been added the further honour of asking me to also inaugurate the session. I thank the leaders for their kind invitations and am grateful for being thus given an opportunity of saying a few words to the distinguished delegates who are present here this morning and who have come from different parts of the country.

While in the pre-independence days there were Sabhas of Kashmiri Pandits functioning in different parts of India, these associations mainly represented Kashmiri Pandits having Urdu as their mother tongue. The large scale exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley into different parts of India after the partition of the country led to the formation of additional Sabhas in all the metropolitan cities of the country. It was vitally necessary that an All India body should come into being to which the regional Sabhas could get affiliated and thus have a common programme for social work within the community. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Kashmiri Samaj of Allahabad for having given the lead in this direction. Delegates from Calcutta to the first conference held last year in Allahabad were full of praise for the constructive work done in those two days. The members of the Calcutta Sabha felt enthused and its Executive Committee fully endorsed the objectives of the Conference as formulated in Allahabad.

Ladies and Gentlemen, in another three months and few days we shall be celebrating Navreh or Nowroz, our new year day and completing the 5056th year of the Saphth Rishi Era. While I do not know if the Saphth Rishi Era is in any way connected with or derived from the Great Bear in the heavens above, it is interesting that the recorded history of Kashmir, after discarding from it the mythological day-dreaming of Kalhan Pandit dates back to B. C. 2450 i. e. over four thousand and four hundred years from now. And if there is some historical truth in Kalhan Pandit's build-up of the earlier period, the Saphth Rishi Era may well represent that point of time in the past when an organised Government was set up in Kashmir. During these last 5000 years, Kashmir had golden periods as well as periods of chaos, tyranny and oppression. It was during this period that Asoka founded the city of Srinagar near the present Badam Bagh now called Punardrishtan or Pandrethen in Kashmir. Till the middle of the 14th century Kashmir was ruled by Hindu kings and the population comprised of different caste of Hindus. Some two thousand and odd years ago there was a brief Budhist period. During periods of chaos and oppression before the 14th century large

scale migrations took place. Thus there is a belief that the Saraswat Brahmins of West Coast originally were the inhabitants of Kashmir. And during the golden and prosperous periods wise kings invited learned men to come and settle down in Kashmir. Thus Bhavabhuti, the great Sanskrit poet, came from Vidharba and joined the court of Lalitaditya, in whose reign also came a Brahmin family from Kanauj to settle down in Kashmir and two hundred years later a descendent of this family, the great Abhinavagupta, became the most important exponent of Kashmir School of Shivaism.

In 1339 A. D. Kashmir had its first Muslim Sultan. During the following few centuries Kashmir became mainly Muslim except for a small group of brahmins who some-how or other managed not to embrace Islam. I do not want to speak about the controversial subject of the conversion into Islam of a whole people, with few exceptions, from a religion which had over a period of 3500 years become their way of life. I would however, like to point out a rather significant feature of this conversion. In Kashmir alone there was wholesale conversion and not so in the rest of India.

In the pre-Islamic period the Kashmiri Brahmins or Bhatt as he was then called, made significant contribution to Sanskrit literature. It is now accepted that Kalidas hailed from Kashmir and was born around the 5th or first half of the 6th century A. D. possibly in the Pampore area. Literary giants like Kayat, Mammat, Balban, Kshemendra, Abhinavagupta flourished in Kashmir. Hindus have not been history minded. The history of ancient India had to be constructed from the travelogues of foreign historians, scholars and philosophers who visited this country in ancient times, from Vedas and other scriptures, from coins, rock addicts etc. etc. It was a foreigner who discovered that the Piyadasi of the rock addicts was no other than the great Ashoka. In 1773 Sir William Jones identified Sandracottus of Greek historians as Chandragupta of the Indian lore. In 1834, James Prinsep deciphered the long forgotten alphabets of our ancient inscriptions. Again it was left to a Kashmir Brahmin to be the first historian of ancient India. Kalhan Pandit's Ragtarangni is based on sound principals of recording history. He made use of all the available evidence and it is only, where no evidence was available, that he relied on mythology and the stories carried from mouth to mouth over the centuries. Kalhan Pandit began to write Rajtarangni in 1148 AD and completed it in the following year. His work was followed up by Pandit Jonaraja in his Rajavale; by Pandit Shrivara in his Jain Rajtarangni, by Prajyabhata in his Raja Valipataka and finally by Shuka, accounting historical events of Kashmir upto 1546 A.D., i.e. some year after Akbar's conquest of Kashmir. Out of 16 most famous Rhetoricians of ancient India 14 were Kashmiris. I have no doubt that you all join me in paying our homage to these great ancestors of ours.

It is on us, the Kashmiri Pandits now living, that the mantle of this greatness falls. But how many of us are there. No exact figures have become available to me. I have, however, tried to do a reckoning. The census of 1931 revealed that the valley had a population of 13,23 lacs, out of which approximately 63000 were Kashmiri pandits. In March 1941 the population of the valley had increased to 14.64 lacs and if the Kashmiri Pandits had multiplied in the same ratio they should have numbered 78000. In 1961 census showed the number of Kashmiri speaking people in the valley as 19.59 lacs. It must be remembered that this figure could not possibly include Kashmiri speaking people of Pakistan. One can safely assume that in 1961 Kashmiri pandits in the valley would have numbered around 1.10 lacs. I do not know what the position today is. I equally do not know the number of Urdu speaking Kashmiris, nor do I have reliable information on the number of Kashmiri speaking Kashmiris living outside Kashmir. It would not perhaps be an exaggeration or an underestimate if one were to place the number of Kashmiri Pandits now living in the valley and outside and having their mother tongue as Kashmiri or Urdu at 2 lacs. We, therefore, continue to be a very

small community. The Kashmiri saying is that Kashir Ruz Kaha Garo. If it was so, then only eleven families or households of Kashmiri Pandits were left in the Valley after the conversion into Islam of the Hindus was completed. So the two lac Kashmiri pandits who are surviving today and living in the valley and different parts of India and abroad, irrespective of being Kashmiri or Urdu speaking, constitute what is of the Bhattas or Brahmins who flourished for three and a half thousand years in Kashmir and contributed richly to the literature and culture of the country. Let us be proud of this heritage

Kashmiri Hindus who migrated to India several centuries ago became an active part of the community in their new homeland. Over a brief period of time, they changed their names and surnames, spoke the language of the area and brought up their children as natives. They thus got assimilated in the mainstream of the life of the area. They are no longer Kashmiris and their Brahmins are no longer Kashmiri Pandits. But the later immigrants who came to India and largely settled in Northern India retained the customs of their motherland and observed all the festivals as before. Unfortunately they lost contact with the Valley and it is natural that in the second generation they should have started speaking mainly Urdu and in course of time Urdu should have become their mother tongue. A logical follow up of this seclusion has been marriages within the Urdu speaking group. I am sure one generation this way or that of the Urdu speaking Kashmiris must be related to each other. It is equally true about the Kashmiri speaking Pandits. And if we go a few centuries backwards our ancestors must have been close relations. Is it not a great pity that a community of two lacs people, professing the same religion and caste, having common customs and celebrating common festivals and claiming to be Kashmiris, should not be speaking to each other in Kashmiri. A common language ultimately becomes an emotional bond. In 1905 Lord Curzon decided to divide Bengal. Whole of Bengal, Hindus and Muslims alike opposed it and seven years later the unity of Bengal was restored. In 1947 Bengal was again divided but foolishly were tagged on to the Urdu speaking Muslims of Western India. Thus the Muslim Bengalis marriage did not last even 25 years I could quote numerous other instances of the great pull and the emotional impact exercised by a common language. May I most respectfully urge you to take concrete steps to ensure that propagation of Kashmiri in Devnagri script, as decided upon last year, becomes a reality. The main burden of this task must fall on the younger generation, for if they learn Kashmiri, they will be able to speak to their children in Kashmiri and Kashmiri will once again become the mother tongue of us all.

We must have in the distant past, Brahmins as we were, devoted our energies in literary pursuits and engaged ourselves in various professions. Our ancestors wrote treatises on Ayurved, Astrology, Astronomy, etc. As now, we must have then also been lawyers, doctors, administrators and advisors to Royalty. A small community though we have now become, we have retained and perhaps developed it further, our catholicity and ability to adopt ourselves quickly to changing conditions. Thus when Sanskrit and Prakrit got into disuse and Persian and eventually Urdu became the language of the gentile, we made our contribution to the literature of these languages. While Bahare-Gulshane-Kashmir is a collection of selected works of Kashmiri Pandit poets, there is no denying the fact that Kashmiris enriched Persian and Urdu literatures. Pandit Bishan Narayan Dhar Chakbast, Pandit Daya Shankar Kaul 'Naseem', Pandit Rattan Nath Dhar Sarshav are a few of the many whose prose and poetry will live forever in the world of Urdu literature. Kashmiri Pandits are now settled in large numbers in several parts of India. Many of these parts of the country are neither Urdu or Hindi speaking, but have their own rich literature and traditions of music and dance. This regional literature is fast developing further. I hope the Kashmiri Pandit will make his contribution to the growth of regional literature too.

I believe it was customary in the pre-independence days for the well-to-do Kashmiris living in India to engage Kashmiri speaking cooks. Having lost contact with the valley, some Kashmiri pandits living in India for generations came to believe that the Pandits in the valley were by and large only cooks. I recall one of such Kashmiri Pandit telling me in a Board Room that the only thing great about the Kashmiri Pandits of Srinagar was that they were wonderful cooks. I explained to him that the Kashmiri cooks were good and there were other breeds of Kashmiri Pandits living in the valley. I am not complaining nor did I take umbrage on the observation made in the Board Room. I have had other similar experiences. Somehow or other I feel that it would not have been so if we all had Kashmiri as our mother-tongue. However, what is of some importance now is that the two wings of the Biradari should integrate. Let there be free social intercourse between the two wings and hopefully this will lead to marriages and thus bind the two sections together and make the propagation of Kashmir easier.

We are weighed down by some ancient customs and traditions which have no relevance in this modern age of science and technology. I refer particularly to the evil custom of Dowry. It is an ancient sickness with the Kashmiri Pandits. Even Lallishwar has referred to this evil in the following vakya :

Kentchen Dittum Golala Yethey
Kentchen Zonthum Ne Denas Var
Kentchen Chintham Nal Brahma Huchoy
Bhagavana Chyani Guch Namaskar

It may be noted that she has referred to unmarried girls not as a millstones round the neck but also as ones paying for the sin of having killed brahmins in the past life. In her time born as she was in 1335 A. D , women were totally illeterate. But today every girl in the Valley and outside has had University education and many have acquired professional qualifications. Why do such girls agree to their parents being subjected to the evil and undesirable pressures of giving dowries? Small community as we are, let us give the lead by doing away with dowry. Ardent Hindu though I am, I cannot help sometimes feeling depressed when I see huge quantities of dry fruits and pure ghee being burnt hour after hour in our havans and other religious ceremonies. Would it not please God more if the stuff so consigned to flames was distributed amongst His starving children. We need to simplify our ceremonials and I hope we will realise the wisdom of what Lallishwari told the Bhattas who was dragging a sheep to Hari Prabhat with the intention of offering the animal as Bali to the Goddess and in return secure the well being of his family.

Laz Kasie Sheet Nivasi, Irana Jala Karan Aahar
Che Komu whunnai Heata Bhatta Pals Korun Chaitanya Ahar
This animal provides you the wherewithal to cover your nudity
and gives you warmth in the bitter winter and poor animal only
wants grass and water for its survival Who has asked you,
O, pigheaded and ignorant brahmin to offer meat as food to a
chunk of rock.

I have kept you away from deliberations and I extend to you my best wishes for fruitful discussions in the afternoon. With greatest pleasure I inaugurate this conference with the Brahmanic incantation of Gayatri Mantras :