



Connecting Roots

Net-journal of 'Project Zaan'

For Private Circulation Only

प्रागाश
پراگاش



Praagaash
प्रागम

Dedicated to Our Heritage, Our Language and Our Culture



'Longing for Kashmir'
Painting by Shihij Kaw

ॐ नमामि त्वां शारदा देवीं, महाभागीं भगवतीं काश्मीर पुरवासिनीं
विद्या दायिनीं रक्ष माम् रक्ष माम् । नमामि त्वाम् ।

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Editorial ... T.N.Dhar 'Kundan'

Praagaash is a platform which brings together writers and readers, those who are interested in literature in its various forms, prose, poetry, criticism, anecdotes, humour. We are glad that this platform is used and liked by Kashmiris of all hues, both within the valley and outside. We are delighted to record that this platform has been receiving affection and appreciation from all corners. Even so our endeavour will be to improve the magazine both in content and presentation, for which your suggestions are solicited.



We were sorry to know about the sad demise of two very prolific and popular writers, late Shri Autar Krishna Rehbar and late Shri Hriday Koul Bharati. Both were prose writers who made a niche in story writing and drama writing. Their dramas and serials aired on Radio Kashmir and Door Darshan, Srinagar, were very popular and well received. The void created by their leaving this world is hard to fill. Both had a special style of writing of their own for which they received various awards. May their souls rest in peace. We offer our condolence to their bereaved families.



Inspiration : Late Shri J.N.Kachroo ~ Guide & Consulting Editor : Shri T.N.Dhar 'Kundan' ~ Editor : M.K.Raina ~ Overseas Coordinator : Dr. Zarka Batul, London
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वाख - लल छद

नाँभिस्थानस चित ज़लुवनी
ब्रह्मस्थानस शिशिरुन म्ख ।
ब्रह्मांडस छय नद वँहवुनी
तवय तुरुन हुह, हाह गव तोत ॥

शुख - शेख नूर-उद-दीन वली

केंचन कबर छय पोश ज़न शेरे
केंचन कबर छय सियाह चाह ।
केंह गॅल्यु साह्यबु सुंजे वीरे
केंह गॅय ज़ेरे अकि गुमराह ॥



نابستانِ ژت زلونی
برہمستانِ ششرن موکھ
برہمانڈس چھے ندوہونی
توے ژن ہہ، ہاہ گو توٹ

کینژن قبر چھے پوش زن شیرے
کینژن قبر چھے سیاہ چاہ
کینہ گگر صاحپہ ہنزے ویرے
کینہ گئیہ زیرے اکہ گمراہ



سُو کُوس اَخْواہ یَمِیس نُو دِلس مَنجِ وِثان تَمَاح |
 سُو کُوس نُو یِخّان شِوِکُ فُولِیِ دِیل اَنُون بَجاہ | |
 یِ کَمّی سائِ دِوِپُی دُھ کِڈُون خُ وِونْی دِیلِاِوِری |
 وِنوس وِنان خِ اَئْثْی وِونْ لْیِخِن وائِیِ اِرتِیکاہ | |
 مِ اِوس دِیدِمان تَسُوند سُو رِوِی تُو رِوِایِث |
 سُو اِوس تَشَنُو تِوتِی وِنْیَم وَاہ تُو مَرہِبا | |
 پِث کائِسی اِنِسانَس اَندرِ گِوش دِیث خُ اَخ ہِیِوان |
 یُس خِیپ کَئِریث نِران مَتان کُنی وِیجِی کِران رُوسِوا | |
 بے اَر کَلنڈَر تِی مُدِی گَئِذِیث خِشَمُو ہِوت |
 اَندُری تَلِوتُومَن تِی بُونجِ تُو پَہَر کَئِری کِجَا | |
 وُڈان بُو خُوس کِرا رُوس پَئْثُری پِکان خُ خِش |
 دِیمِی بُو وُف پَنونْی دِیتَم سِکُون اَخ بُونجَا | |
 جِوہَر دِپان کِتی تَام پَتُ ہِنُو اِوِ جَسَرَس مَنجِ |
 نَ وُخ مِ تَن سُو جِاَہ تُو نَی خُ کَاہ اِتاہ پِتاہ | |



بے اَر کَلنڈَر تِی مُدِی گَئِذِیث خِشَمُو ہِوت
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 نَ وُخ مِ تَن سُو جِاَہ تُو نَی خُ کَاہ اِتاہ پِتاہ

گزل

رتن لال جویہر



غزل رتن لال جویہر

سُ کُوس اَخْواہ یَمِیس نُو دِلس مَنز وِوتِحاں طُع
 سُ کُوس نُو یِخّان شِوِکُ بَخلِیِ دِیل اَنُون بَجاہ
 یِ کَمّی سائِ دِوِپُی دُھ کِڈُون خُ وِونْی دِیلِاِوِری
 وِنوس وِنان خِ اَئْثْی وِونْ لْیِخِن وائِیِ اِرتِیکاہ
 مِ اِوس دِیدِمان تَسُوند سُو رِوِی تُو رِوِایِث
 سُو اِوس تَشَنُو تِوتِی وِنْیَم وَاہ تُو مَرہِبا
 پِث کائِسی اِنِسانَس اَندرِ گِوش دِیث خُ اَخ ہِیِوان
 یُس خِیپ کَئِریث نِران مَتان کُنی وِیجِی کِران رُوسِوا

My Medical Journey : Dr K.L.Chowdhury

Medical Practice Begins At Home

I was an intern in the summer of 1962. After graduating from Medical College Patiala, I had sought special permission from the university to complete my twelve month internship at the SMHS Hospital affiliated to the Srinagar Medical College. My internship started with Internal Medicine.

One Sunday morning, mother called me to examine grandfather. She had found him crouched up in bed when she walked into his room for her customary morning greeting. He complained of pain in the abdomen.

I knew from my childhood that grandfather suffered from chronic bronchitis and duodenal ulcer. He had survived numerous episodes of ulcer bleed. He would often rush me to the grocer for a packet of baking soda and would wash a spoonful down his gullet with a glass of water whenever he suffered ulcer pains. That gave him instant relief. But this pain was different, he explained. It had started early at dawn and soda bicarb had given no relief. It was centred below the navel, intermittent and crampy. There was no nausea or vomiting. He had not moved his bowels.

I had always remembered him as looking thin, weak and old. Now, when I looked at him as a patient for the first time, he seemed quite emaciated and it made me at once sad. But I set aside my

emotions, got down to business and started examining him.

There was no fever. Pulse and blood pressure were within normal range. He was breathing quietly. He did not complain much. He even made light of his symptoms, but from the expression on his face he was visibly in pain.

Grandfather had worn his pyjama high above the navel. I tried to loosen the knot to pull it down for a proper look at his abdomen, but he would not let me. Only after I reassured him that I would respect his privacy did he let me release the string just enough to let me check him up.

The abdomen was flat. It was tense, but there was no tenderness anywhere. I noticed that he placed his hand all along on his right groin. I gently pulled away his hand to discover a swelling under the pyjama.

"This is nothing; it has been there for quite some time. It comes and goes and gives me no trouble. It is my tummy that hurts," grandfather tried to explain it away in his feeble husky voice as he tied the pyjama string hastily back with his skinny fingers.

The words of my professor of



surgery rang in my ears, "Do not ever forget to look at the hernia sites in any case of abdominal pain," and I jerked the trouser down, impatiently, almost irreverently, for a thorough examination. He was embarrassed at the exposure, annoyed with me for my audacity.

I felt a tense, slightly tender, apple-sized swelling in the groin. It was an inguinal hernia. I asked him to cough to find out if the impulse would transmit to the swelling, but it did not. I tried in vain to reduce the swelling by pushing it gently back into the abdomen, much against grandfather's remonstrations.

The absent cough impulse and the failure to push back the hernia contents into the abdomen were signs of an obstructed hernia. It was a surgical emergency!

This was the first time since I had graduated that I had been asked to examine a patient on my own in a private setting, and it happened to be my grandfather. I had to be very sure about my clinical impression. I opened the text book of surgery to corroborate the findings.

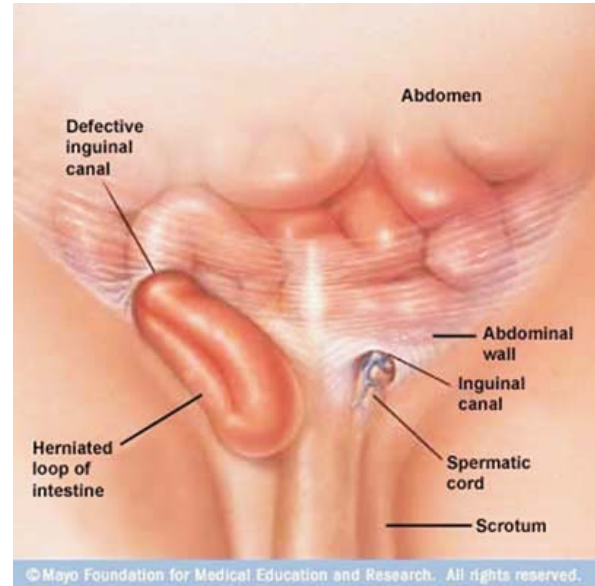
By now, father had arrived on the scene – anxious and tense. I explained the situation and the need for urgent surgery. Father looked incredulous.

"What are you talking about? Surgery on this fragile old man! Can he take it; can he survive surgery with that lung problem of his? Can he tolerate anaesthesia?" He shot questions one after the other, like the lawyer he was, as if

taking on a professional witness. I felt like being in the dock. Relevant questions, no doubt. I had not even considered them. Like a typical trainee, I had concerned myself only with the diagnosis and none of the finer details that come with experience. And, strangely, I was not behaving or thinking like a grandson whose grandfather had taken ill, but as a doctor examining a patient and wanting to get to the bottom of the clinical situation.

"Are you sure about your diagnosis? Have you seen cases like that before as a student?" Father looked at me quizzically. I had seen hernias but never an obstructed one.

"Even if it is what you say, is there no other way." He looked at me, a mixture of cynicism about a novice and compassion for a son that only a parent is capable of. The rest of the family that had assembled



looked on, again with a mixed sense of concern about the patriarch and empathy for me.

I said I was certain we were dealing with an inguinal hernia, and that it had obstructed. However, there was a small chance we might avoid or delay surgery. I would attempt to reduce the hernia under sedation, though I was not sure about the procedure for I had never seen it being done during my student days. At best, it would be a temporizing measure; at worst, it would not work, I said.

Father was very understanding. The possibility of a non-surgical intervention appealed to him. He gave me a free hand. Not many would in that situation, but he trusted me, looking at my cool assurance. He always believed in his children, and here was a great occasion to test out his belief.

I consulted my surgery text book again, went over the procedure for hernia reduction in detail, and got back to grandfather. He was shy, restrictive, uncooperative, trying to conceal the groin with his hands while I proceeded with the manoeuvre.

It is one thing to have learned all the theory and graduated with honours, quite another to translate that knowledge into the nitty-gritty of the everyday practice of medicine. I started with deep trepidation - nervous, over-cautious and gauche - as I attempted the reduction, while the whole family waited with bated breaths. The swelling would not budge. I tried a second time, but the hernia was stuck. I stopped,

fearing that any further attempts might cause strangulation of the hernia. That would be catastrophic.

And then, for the first time that morning, I sat down beside my grandfather and looked at his deep-set brown eyes, his sunken cheeks, the deep furrows in his brow and the loose wrinkled skin on his thin neck. He was like a baby - pure, innocent, helpless. He looked back at me, all compassion and affection.

"Why do you worry so much? I am an old man; I have lived my years. Whatever will be will be. You tried your best. I think the pain will settle down soon. Let me get some rest now."

Even as he was in pain, he fully understood my predicament. I loved him most that instant.

"No, grandfather, I will not let us take it lightly; we cannot sleep over it."

I came out of grandfather's room and informed the anxious gathering that there was no way out except a surgical reduction and repair of the hernia. We must take him to the hospital.

As if he had read my thoughts, father asked, "I know you are right, but would you like to have the opinion of a surgeon about the feasibility of surgery before we shift him to the hospital?"

"Certainly, yes," I replied.

Father suggested Dr. BMB, an up-and-coming surgeon, a FRCS from England. He was an assistant professor of surgery at the Srinagar Medical College. I did not know him personally; had not even heard of him, for I was still new in the

profession.

My cousin and I hired a tonga to fetch him from his residence. I introduced myself and explained the case. He agreed to visit grandfather.

It used to be an event in the neighbourhood when a doctor came visiting a patient. While Dr. BMB took time to examine the patient, the neighbours started pouring in, inquiring. I was like a student again, waiting for the result. At the moment, I was more concerned whether the surgeon agreed with me than about my grandfather's illness.

The doctor might have sensed my trepidation. Looking appreciatively at me, he addressed father, "Your son is right; we are dealing with an obstructed hernia. Manual reduction often fails in this situation. It calls for surgery."

It must be a rare moment in the life of a novice in the profession to get the backing of a senior, especially in the presence of a huge assembly of relatives and neighbours. But now was also the time for action. Dr. BMB said he could not perform surgery for it was not his admission day. Dr. GRM, a senior surgeon, was on call, he informed us.

We moved grandfather to the hospital. Having settled him in the ward, an ambulance was sent to Dr. GRM with the surgical resident's note detailing the salient features. I decided to go along in order to expedite the proceedings and to provide my own impressions on the case to the surgeon.

Dr. GRM came out on the veranda, a

bespectacled stocky fellow looking more a pugilist than a surgeon. He went through the case sheet hurriedly and, without giving it a second thought, wrote a note, handed it over to the ambulance driver and motioned him to go, eyeing me just once as he started to go back inside his house.

"Sir, won't you come and operate upon this patient?" I asked with humility.

"I will see him tomorrow; meanwhile I have written out the instructions."

He had suggested conservative measures - a nothing by mouth, intravenous fluids and pain killers.

I revealed that I was an intern, that the patient was my grandfather, that I had attempted reduction without success. I laid bare my fears that the hernia may strangulate if not operated upon in time. Tomorrow might be too late, I said. And would he not, for the sake of a fellow professional, come and have a look at the patient?

"Don't teach me surgery, young man," he barked, and so did his bulldog. I thought the canine was waiting for a signal to tear me to pieces but I was unmoved. I stood firm, facing the surgeon and his dog.

"In that case, sir, I hope you have no objection if I seek the department head and request him to examine my grandfather," I said.

He was incensed at my audacity. "I do not care whose advice you seek, nor if someone else wants to take over this case."

I wished to get away from there as soon as possible. I asked the ambulance

driver to head for Prof. Khanna's residence. I knew him; he had been my professor at Medical College Patiala. The previous year, after retirement, he had accepted the position at the Srinagar Medical College.

I introduced myself to Prof. Khanna. It did not take him long to place me as his ex-student. Lean and handsome, gracious and soft spoken, he made light of my disappointment with his colleague, and wasted no time to board the ambulance on way to the hospital.

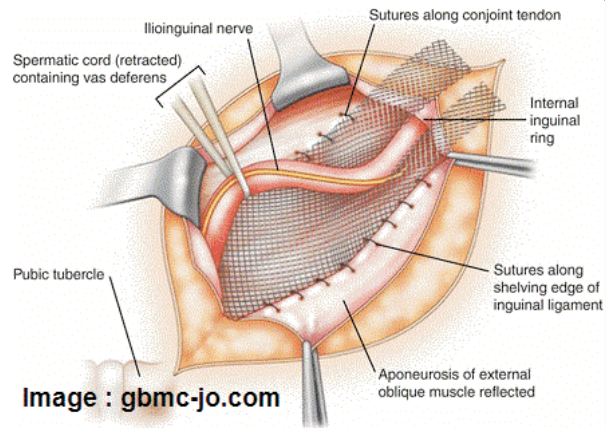
It was a proud moment for me to introduce my father to the illustrious professor. His tension eased the moment he realized that grandfather would be in the best hands.

Prof. Khanna won over grandfather with his sober demeanour, his wide grin and his soft touch. "It will take us an hour to set you on course," he said reassuringly after he finished examining him.

Grandfather was moved to the operation theatre. When I sought permission to watch the operation, Prof. Khanna surprised me. "Of course, you will wash up and assist, won't you?"

I did not dare to admit that I had never assisted in an operation, and hardly ever watched any during my student days. I had yet to rotate my internship in surgery. But this was a matter of prestige besides an opportunity to prove myself.

Surgery was a smooth affair. Prof. Khanna spoke softly, almost inaudibly, while operating, relating interesting anecdotes from his vast surgical



experience, gently guiding me and the theatre assistant, never losing his temper at my clumsiness in handling instruments and, literally, teaching by the hand. He made us all feel at such ease that I forgot this was my first operation. I forgot that the patient under the scalpel was my dear grandfather.

It was a clean job, accomplished in fifty minutes. Grandfather came out of anaesthesia and was moved to the ward.

The whole crowd of relatives and neighbours was waiting in the corridor to thank the surgeon, eyeing me with admiration. Or, that is what I thought.

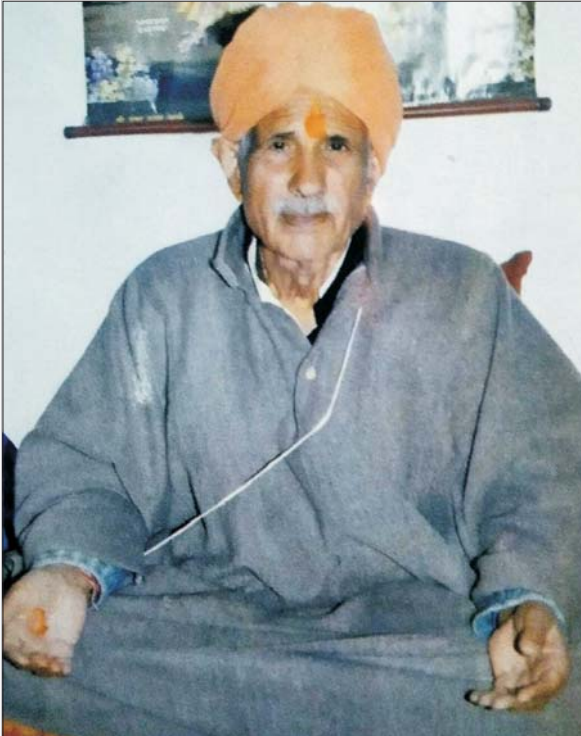
Recovery was uneventful. Grandfather returned to a grand homecoming. Neighbours and relatives had assembled to receive him. And me!

"It was all because of you," everyone patted my back in appreciation. They were proud that I had diagnosed my first test case correctly, assisted in surgery for the

Continued on Page 28

Saints & Sages - B.L.Razdan Mahatma Pt. Jagannath Bhan

Born on 8th March, 1929 on the day of Mahashivratri, Pandit Jagannath Bhan is the eldest living descendent of the spiritual lineage of the renowned saint-poet of Kashmir Swami Krishna Joo Razdan. His father, Pandit Srikanth Bhan was a native of Manigam, Gandherbal. Orphaned at a young age, Bhan Sahib was brought up by his maternal grandfather Shri Samsar Chand Gurtu at Srinagar, where he was born as well. He came in contact with Mahatma Kanth Kak Sharabhi, the



principal disciple of Swami Krishen Joo Razdan, and adopted Bhakti Marg as a path of liberation. Like his preceptors, he too was a house-holder and had joined the J&K Police. He was married to Mrs. Somawati, who, like him, was also an employee of the J&K Government.



Swami Jagannath Bhan is also a Kashmiri Bhakti poet in his own right and has already published two volumes of his poetry so far. He is an ardent believer in charity and welfare of others. In order to perpetuate the spiritual legacy of Swami Krishna Joo Razdan, he founded an Ashram at Ganga Nagar, Bantalab, Jammu, where he gives spiritual discourses and guidance to his disciples.

Largely, because of his simple nature and modest conduct, he is not so well known in the community circles as he should have been. His works are being consolidated in a single volume even as these have been already published in three small separate volumes.

A poem of the Mahatma is reproduced here.

Continued on next Page

गॉफिल पानो पानस च्नु सनतो

गॉफिल पानो पानस च्नु सनतो
पानो वनतो कति च्नुय आख

माजि ज़ायोख नेथु नोन आयोख
खॉली अथवय च्नु वापस द्राख
वुनि छु आदन सीरस सनतो
पानो वनतो कति च्नुय आख

अज़ ताम कुचन माजन च्नु ज़ायोख
आयोख वॅरिथ नो ज़ांह अमिच ज़ान
गॉफिल च्नु रूदखो कोनु छुख सनतो
पानो वनतो कति च्नुय आख

गर्भ प्रन कोरमुत रूदय नु यादुय
गर्भ द्राख यान्य ताम मॅशिरुथ च्नु
गर्भ प्रन कोनु छुख याद करन तो
पानो वनतो कति च्नुय आख

पाँच़ युग युन गछुनथोवुथ नु यादुय
पाँच़ युग नेति कर्मथॅविथ नु याद
कर्म रोस येति कति तार छुय बनतो
पानो वनतो कति च्नुय आख

अज्ञान छु गटुकार अथ मंज़ छि यीरय
फेरु असि ओनमुत मायायि छु
ज्ञानह गाशि मायाइ निशि गछय छयनतो
पानो वनतो कति च्नुय आख

दय नाव सुमरन सुर तो सुय छु सू
बुय मूद तति रूद सुय छु सू
कृष्ण सुमरनह रोस कति यि बिन्नतो
पानो वनतो कति च्नुय आख

भक्ति कृष्णह दिम छुस च्नु शरण तो
शर्ण छुसय च्नु भावनाय सान
हरमुख मे दर्शन साक्षात बनतो
पानो वनतो कति च्नुय आख

शर्ण गछुन गव बडु बोड बल तो
करतो कृष्ण नाव कुय च्नु अभ्यास
मल विक्षेप आवरन गछय चलनतो
पानो वनतो कति च्नुय आख

मायाय नारय कस क्या बन्नतो
नारस ग्यव दियुन कति गव जान
मायाय नारु मंज़ु शुद्ध शांत बनतो
पानो वनतो कति च्नुय आख

Continued on next Page

बुछ बुछ पायस कोनु अँस्य प्यवनतो
वनतो हॉसिल क्या असि आव
अंतह कर्ण मल कोनु अँस्य छलन तो
पानो वनतो कति चुय आख

व्यवहार क्याजि अँस्य करान छी छुन्तो
अपज्युक क्याजि असि बनोव व्यवहार
भक्ति कोनु अस्य छय हॉसिल करन तो
पानो वनतो कति चुय आख

वासदीव भगवानु वन्य गछ सनुनतो
करतो चु गीताय वादय याद
असि अदीनन दि पापन छयन्तो
पानो वनतो कति चुय आख

दय संज दय गच जड़ गछय बयुन्तो
नोन नेरि पानय आत्म प्रकाश
श्री कृष्ण नावस छुय यि गुण तो
पानो वनतो कति चुय आख

नेथुर चु मुचराव छुय सुय नोन तो
निष्कामह कर्मवय सु हॉसिल आव
माया त्रॉविथ चु सॉन्याँस्य बन तो
पानो वनतो कति चुय आख

त्रिगुण माया सदराह छु फोलमुत
वोलमुत असि छुन हेरि ब्वनु नाल

निष्कामह भगती लागि अथ छेन्तो
पानो वनतो कति चुय आख

असार छु सम्सार बाँजीगरन्तो
सत्तसुय सुत्य पजि थाव, न्य ज्ञान
भानो मन्ह वाजि ओंकार खनतो
पानो वनतो कति चुय आख

हेना सुपुंको!!

शुन कते च्हे राह क्हाउन?

तोही च्हे त्मन से काँशरी पाँमू कते करान?

शुन सेती योत किया? तोही च्हे पिने वाने

पेन्दिन सेते काँशरी पाँमू कते करान?

हेना सुपुंको!!

काँशरी बान कते पाँमू रोडिडे?

Expeditions & Explorations - Namrata Wakhloo
Twin Lakes of Mansar & Surinsar

Last winter, we had planned a trip to Vaishno Devi, in Katra, near Jammu. We had a spare day with us so we had thought of spending a night at Patnitop, which is a popular hill station and around 85 km from Katra, in Udhampur district. It so happened that, the day we were to go to Patnitop (6640 ft above MSL), it started snowing there heavily. And as luck would have it, our car was not allowed beyond Udhampur. We had no choice but to turn back. Not wanting to waste our day in disappointment, we checked with the driver on any other place in the vicinity, worth a visit. He recommended the two lakes, Mansar and Surinsar.

About 14 km from Udhampur, we discovered this beautiful lake in the quaint little town of Mansar. We had booked accommodation very close to and

overlooking the lake, which looked very pretty in Twilight. The Lake has a length of more than a mile and is half-a-mile in width, surrounded by hills covered with lush green tree cover. Being winter, it had started getting very cold.



We thought of taking a brief stroll along the lake and then take one of the lanes which led to the tiny village market. There were a few dhabas (shacks) selling tea and food, some vendors selling fresh fruit and vegetables, plus a couple of Mithai (sweetmeats) sellers. We had our dinner and walked back to the guest house.





It was so peaceful to stand on one of the decks on the lake and watch dusk fall over it. The lake was full of fish which were busy leaping in and out of the water to grab something to eat.

About to retire for the night, I walked past an old signboard standing in the lawns, which described the legend behind the lakes, albeit, the writing almost having faded away. I was intrigued to find that the story of the twin lakes went back to the days of the Mahabharata!

The lore goes as such: Babar Vahan, son of Arjun and Ulupi (daughter of the king of the Nagas or serpents), ruled this area. After the war of the Mahabharata, Arjun performed the Ashwamegh Yagya to prove his supremacy over the land. The

horse used in the Yagya was captured by Babar Vahan at a nearby village called Khoon and Arjun was killed by Babar Vahan. Thrilled with his victory, Babar Vahan presented Arjun's head to his mother Ulupi. It was only when she revealed to him that he had unknowingly killed his father, did Babar Vahan understand the blunder he had committed. The only way now to bring Arjun back to life was through the powers of the special Mani (precious gem) from the six-headed serpent king, Sheshnag. Hence, Babar Vahan, using his arrow, made a Surang (tunnel) in Surangsar (now called Surinsar). After defeating Sheshnag and procuring the Mani, he came out at Manisar (now called Mansar). Mansar and Surinsar therefore are holy sites. Mansar is surrounded by ancient temples, which are frequented by devotees. Some Hindus perform the Mundan ceremony (first tonsuring of a child's head) here.

Apart from its religious importance,





the lake seemed to be a popular tourist spot, which one could make out looking at the boating decks and several eateries along the lake. However, being a bitter cold day, there were not many visitors around. The lake has a well-paved walk way around its circumference, with projected decks to enjoy the flora and fauna around. Or simply watch the fish dancing away!

Next morning, after a hot breakfast at one of the tea stalls, we left for Surinsar, which is at a distance of around 30 km from here.

The drive is through a beautiful mountain side with thick pine trees. There is the Surinsar-Mansar wild life sanctuary that you pass through where one can spot

deer, blue-bull and water birds like cranes and ducks.

Surinsar is quite similar to Mansar, vast and surrounded by lush green Trikuta hills. The lake covers about a space of about 1.5 sq miles and is lined with thick pine trees. There is a beautiful island in the centre of it. Adequate private and government accommodation is available at both the places.

So, next time you plan a visit to Jammu or Katra, do build in Mansar and Surinsar in your itinerary.

How to reach: The best way would be to take a train upto Jammu or Udhampur/Katra and a taxi/bus from there. Or a flight to Jammu and a taxi thereon.

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हमुद डा. शौकत शिफा

ڈاکٹر شوکت شفا

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يي هوا खुदायि छु चोन द्युत
 तु शुहुल यि सायि छु चोन द्युत
 छु युतुय नु, ग्रेश्म चंजन अंदर
 सोच वावु ग्रायि छु चोन द्युत
 बु वुफान स्यठाह, बु वुफान यि क्याह
 बु थ्यकां स्यठाह, बु थ्यकां यि क्याह
 नु मे जुव पनुन, नु बदन पनुन
 यि मे छुम खुदायि छु चोन द्युत
 मे म्वछन अंदर छु थोवमुत यि बंद
 सु मे चानि इजनु थोवमुत छु बंद
 बु पकान यकुन तु वुछान यकुन
 सु ति पायि पायि छु चोन द्युत
 यि मॅशिथ मंगुन मे खुदायि गव
 ति मॅशिथ गोवुय नु अता करुन
 यि मंगां बु छुस तु मंगुन ति ज्ञाह
 छु गछान नु ज्ञायि छु चोन द्युत
 यि छु चोन द्युत ज्ञि कलम लेखान
 छु हमुद तु ज्यव छे हमुद परान
 यि दिले शिफा ति वौ हमुदचे
 छु अंदर सरायि छु चोन द्युत



يي هوا خدايه چھ چون ديت، تہ شہل يي سايہ چھ چون ديت
 چھ يئے نہ، گريشمہ ژنجن اندر سوژ واو گزايہ چھ چون ديت
 بہ وُپھال سپٹھاہ بہ وُپھال يہ کياہ، بہ تھربکاں سپٹھاہ بہ تھربکاں يہ کياہ
 نہ ميہ رُو پُئن نہ بدن پُئن، يہ مے چھم خدايه چھ چون ديت
 ميہ موچھن اندر چھ تھومت يہ بند، سہ مے چانہ ازنہ تھومت چھ بند
 بہ پکاں يکُن تہ وُچھال يکُن، سہ تہ پايہ پايہ چھ چون ديت
 يہ مٹھہ منکن ميہ خدايه گو، تہ مٹھہ گووے نہ عطا کرن
 يہ منگان بہ چھس تہ منگن تہ زانہہ، چھ گزھان نہ ضايہ چھ چون ديت
 يہ چھ چون ديت ز قلم لکھاں چھ حمد تہ زو تجھے حمد پراں
 يہ دل شفا تہ وول حمد چے چھ اندر سرايه چھ يہ چون ديت



*Reaching for the Sky : Javid Trali***Air Commodore Hilal Ahmad Rather**

Air Commodore Hilal Ahmad Rather has proven: Reaching for the sky, literally and figuratively.

Cesar Pelli once said, "The desire to reach for the sky runs very deep in the human psyche." That was a motivational saying meant to inspire people for setting and achieving high goals, but Pelli took it literally and built some of the tallest buildings in the world as an architect.

In recent years, some Kashmiris have also literally reached for the sky by giving wings to their goals and have become commercial pilots. They include Sami Ara Surury, Kaneez Fatima, Iram Habib, Captain Tanvi Raina, and Ayesha Aziz. But Hilal Ahmad Rather, who hails from south Kashmir's Anantnag district, had manifested the desire to reach the sky way back in '88 when he was commissioned in Indian Air Force (IAF) as a fighter pilot. He became flight lieutenant in 1993, wing commander in 2004, group captain in 2016 and Air Commodore in 2019. Rather, a recipient of Vayu Sena Medal and Vishisht Seva Medal, has a record of 3,000 accident-free flying hours on mirage-2000, MIG-21 and Kiran aircraft.



He is presently India's Air Attaché to France and became the country's first pilot to see off the batch of Rafale jets from France to India on July 27. Rather, he played a crucial role in the early



delivery of the Rafales. He was previously associated with the weaponization of the Rafale jets according to the Indian requirements.

Rather is certainly the man of the moment but there are many others like him in Kashmir whose achievements and success stories have not been discovered to this day. The achievements of Rather would have been overlooked too, but the war-like situation with China along the LAC in Eastern Ladakh and the controversy surrounding the Rafale deal created the conditions for his notability as he became an "incidental beneficiary" of the widespread admiration.

Taking cue from the success story of Air Commodore Hilal Ahmad Rather:
The success story of Air Commodore Hilal

Ahmad Rather offers a great opportunity to set a precedent to identify and highlight the success stories in Kashmir so that all those successful Kashmiris, whose achievements are inspiring but unheard of, are introduced to their fellow citizens. Unfortunately, the turbulent situation in Kashmir continues to remain an ideal excuse for the national media to highlight and even synthetically magnify the notoriety of a handful of Kashmiris and this leads to the 'othering' and 'demonization' of the entire community. In Kashmir, a certain political class waxes lyrics to further their political goals and that of their handlers.

In such a situation, the people who deserve public attention are never able to grab it. It is to be noted that the information that goes into the public domain is regulated meticulously for creating a desired impact, and both New Delhi and Islamabad, have been playing this game to their advantage. So while singing praises for the militants suits Pakistan – for it ensures a constant stream of radicalized Kashmiri youth ready to lay down their lives at its (Pakistan's) prodding and for its cause – demonizing the same people in mainland India makes for a handy tool to paint the entire Kashmiri population in “political green” to facilitate and justify their 'othering'.

While hours of prime time discussions are dedicated to talk about the likes of Burhan Wani, Zakir Musa, Reyaz Naikoo or for that matter their patrons in the political circles – the likes of Syed Ali Shah Geelani – absolutely no, or



Photo : Business Standard

even at the very best, only a drizzle of information reaches the general public about the Kashmiri achievers, residing in India and foreign lands. It is to be further noted that there are a good number of Kashmiris who have risen to dizzying heights of success by the sheer grit of their hard-work and determination.

In mainland India, some Kashmiris have done exceptionally well in the corporate world, in central services like the IAS, IPS, IFS, IBS, in media, in IT, and so many other diverse fields. In Europe, in the Americas, in China and Japan, and Singapore, in Malaysia, in Australia and across the globe, many Kashmiris have exceptional achievements under their belts, but their stories remain untold – perhaps because they do not translate into media rating points and do not make for a political statement for the varied actors in Kashmir's political amphitheater.

What the mainstream media, and even the governments must realize is that political narratives (and beliefs) are not



(and cannot be) changed by conducting propaganda campaigns but by showcasing the achievements of those who have rejected the path of violence that they understood as leading to only victimhood, and embraced the path of success as a conscious choice.

What if the next captain of Indian cricket is from Kashmir? What if someone from Kashmir makes it to the European premier league football? One can go on and on, counting such possibilities and their positive impact on the psyche of Kashmiris but for making them a reality, the government has to create an enabling

atmosphere in Kashmir, and do some handholding of the Valley's talent pool to channelize it in a constructive manner to usher a positive change.

A beginning has already been made by the Initiative for Competition Promotion in Jammu and Kashmir (ICPJK), a Trust, which is engaged in preparing students for Civil Services exams. Set up under the patronage of A G Mir (IPS, currently J&K's ADGP law and order), ICPJK since its inception in 2008, has thus far trained hundreds of students for civil services; with over 200 of its trainees already having made it to the IAS and KAS, including of course Dr. Shah Faesal, who topped the IAS selection in 2010.

Conclusion:

While Rafale has introduced Air Commodore Hilal Ahmad Rather into the popular imagination of the Kashmir's young population, this opportunity is waiting for a build-up and cannot be wasted. Let the government try and invest some careful thought into channelizing the energy and potential of Kashmiri youth. Now is the time to welcome them and hone their skills. Believe it or not, every second person in Kashmir has the potential to become a fighter pilot, a world-class scientist, an excellent academician, a brilliant doctor, a creative engineer, an outstanding sportsperson, a skilled worker et al., All government needs to do is to create favorable conditions for this potential to thrive.

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अज़ रोज़ू साने, दिलबर म्याने

महजूर



अज़ रोज़ू साने, दिलबे म्याने
बोज़ नुंदु बाने, दिलबर म्याने

खान पॉरॉविम, खॉस्य बरुनॉविम
हावसु चाने, दिलबर म्याने

रोये नाज़ होवुथ, दिल तम्बुलुवुथ
लॉल मिरजाने, दिलबर म्याने

पोश जामु हावान, बुलबुलन बावान
लोलुक माने, दिलबर म्याने

साथा चु रोज़तो, विलु ज़ार बोज़तो
शिलु पदमाने, दिलबर म्याने

बुलबुल सुंद अज़ाब, लोलुक इज़तुराब
गुल क्या ज़ाने, दिलबर म्याने

लोलु होत म्योन पान, योद गछि प्रानान
लोल मा प्राने, दिलबर म्याने

शबनमन म्वख्तु हार, वेरि चानि कोर तैयार
वॅगमि शोचु शाने, दिलबर म्याने

दूर्यर च़ालुन, नारु पान गालुन
छुम ड्यकु लाने, दिलबर म्याने

कुस साज़ो सामान, प्रारान प्रारान
लोल मा प्राने, दिलबर म्याने

सुत्य ह्यथ महजूर, मे ति कोर वादु पूर
द्रायस क्राने, दिलबर म्याने

Kundanspeak - T.N.Dhar 'Kundan' Expiation

We are all humans. We think, we express ourselves and we act. In all these three domains we are sometimes right and sometimes wrong. Actually, the seed of everything is in our mind, which is the store house of thoughts and workshop of thinking.

Whenever we express ourselves by word of mouth or in writing, it is the outcome of our thought process. Thereafter the same translates into action. So, the good or bad starts from our mind. This mind is in turn affected by the emotions and feelings emanating from our heart and discretion and discrimination dictated by our intellect. We are, in due course, rewarded for whatever good we think, utter and do.

Similarly, we are punished for the bad thought, utterance and deed. This bad we do sometimes knowingly and sometimes unknowingly. Having done it knowingly, we realise it sometime in future that we ought not have done that, but there is no way to undo it except to feel sorry for it. In case it has happened unknowingly, as soon as we realise the mistake of having thought, uttered or done something undesirable, we feel the need for atonement or expiation.

We may regret having done something wrong but only regretting is not enough. Either we atone for it, which

means to make up or we expiate meaning to make amends for the wrong thought, expression or deed. In Indian language the word for these two terms is '*Prayaschit*', which is made up of two words, '*Prayah*', or a sin and '*Chit*', or reflection of. So, we reflect on the sin we have committed knowingly or unknowingly and then make amends for the same.



In Christianity, there is the practice of confession, having realised that a sin has been committed, the person goes to a church and makes a confession in secret before a padre.

Realising a sin or something wrong committed and reflecting on it are not sufficient. Nor does the action end at making amends for the same. These things are justified and appreciated as far as they go but something else, in fact, much more is needed, desirable and expected.

There must be a resolve that we will not commit the same mistake of wrongdoing again. A lesson is to be learnt and followed throughout in our future lives. We atone for the wrong done and make

good the mistake at one time, but we should correct ourselves once for all so that similar folly is not repeated knowingly or unknowingly ever in future. There is a prayer prescribed in our scriptures and adopted by us traditionally. We pray before the Divine, '*Tanme manah shiva sankalpam-astu* – May my mind be full of noble and pious thoughts and resolutions'. Obviously, when the mind has noble thoughts and pious resolve, our words and deeds will follow suit and whatever we say and whatever we do shall be pious, noble and beneficial for all. Then and then alone shall expiation be justified, fruitful and purposeful.

It is a matter of common knowledge that bad things have an attraction. These give some pleasure too, however short lived that may be. Had it not been so, nobody would tread on the wrong path. But we must realise and understand that piety, purity, truth and nobility may be initially hard to practice but eventually in the long run these give us satisfaction, pleasure and lasting peace. Treading on this pious path we have not to atone for anything, nor expiate nor regret. We live a life of contentment and peace with no fear or fright to disturb our mind.

There is a religious connotation too to expiation. People go to important places of worship, shrines of sages and savants, pray there and take a vow that they will not repeat the wrong that they had committed in the past. They take a dip in the holy rivers and again make a promise

to live a life of piety and truth. Some people even perform some '*yajnas*', rituals of sacrificial fire. They offer oblations to the sacred fire while the priests chant '*Veda mantras*'. Thereafter they offer money and clothes to the priests and thereby atone for the sins committed. All these acts are relevant and useful only if the attitude on the part of the sinner is, 'thus far and no further'. In other words, there should be a determination that whatever wrong and sinful has happened should be a matter of the past and there should be a resolve and a commitment that this wrong and sinful act shall not be repeated under any circumstances.

Man is so weak that quite often he falls prey to the attraction inherent in a wrongdoing or a sinful act. Eventually, when he faces the consequences, he regrets and feels sorry for his actions. Even so, he is strong enough to take a bold step too. Once he makes up his mind, once he resolves and once he is determined to tread on the right path, no attraction can divert his attention. All that is needed is a resolve and a sincere commitment. After all life itself is a big workshop and a practical school of learning.

We learn from others, both elders and youngsters. We learn from their mistakes too and surely from their achievements and noble deeds. If we are eager to learn and determined to correct ourselves, we must keep our eyes and ears open to observe and to listen.

Thereafter, we may draw our own conclusions and learn a lesson or two. Our thought process keeps on changing and noble thoughts get stored in our minds. These noble thoughts in turn affect our words and deeds and ennoble them with the result that we are counted among good people.

Expiation, atonement and taking a vow are good and desirable only if our determination to refrain from committing the past sins and wrong deeds is firm and unchangeable. After all God has given us intellect that places us at the highest step on the ladder of creation. This intellect enables us to discriminate between good and bad, desirable and undesirable, beneficial and harmful as also transient and permanent. We must make a liberal use of this intellect in what to think and what not to think, what to say and what to avoid saying and, above all, what to do and what to refrain from doing. If we are always guided by the discriminating intellect in thought, word and deed, there will be no need for atonement or expiation. There will be no wrongdoing and, therefore, no rectification, no sin committed no atonement and nothing for which we may have to regret or feel ashamed. Yet, since to err is human, expiation will be there for us to do course correction in the journey of our lives.

Expiation becomes necessary in every walk of life, in every field and in every profession. Take the case of politicians. These days we often see many

of them changing political parties with divergent ideologies, simply for self-aggrandizement, to get a plum post or to get a position of power, which may not be available to them in their original political set up because of other better contenders. Come to think of poets and writers. In times of yore they used to thrive, get honour, recognition and benefits, simply by writing in praise of kings and rulers, who provided them shelter. They wrote eulogies in their praise unmindful of whether they were noble or tyrants, whether they deserved these praises (called *Qaseeda*) or not.

These days also we find people writing in praise of those sections of the society who wield power and who can, in turn, provide them benefits in cash or kind or positions of profit and prominence. Similarly, in other workplaces, offices, establishments and companies too we find people who indulge in the acts of false praising in order to get favours. These people do not ever think of expiation although expiation is their primary duty along with a vow not to sell their conscience. If they are humans with a sense of responsibility, if they know the value of ethics and morality, sincerity and truth they shall and they must expiate and, thereafter learn to be honest and fearless. Thereby there will be no occasion for them to expiate, atone or feel regret.

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کلیاتِ راز

غزل

پنڈت ویدلال کول راز

شبِ غم کی بھی سحر ہے مجھے تسلیم نہیں
 میری آہوں میں اثر ہے مجھے تسلیم نہیں
 گردشِ شمس و قمر ہے مجھے تسلیم نہیں
 حیلہ بُو بھی چارہ گر ہے مجھے تسلیم نہیں
 ترکِ کردیں شیوہِ ظلم و ستم، کہتے ہیں
 ان کے بھی دل ہے جگر ہے مجھے تسلیم نہیں
 فاش ہو رازِ محبت اُنہیں ڈر کس کا ہے
 دُورین اُن کی نظر ہے مجھے تسلیم نہیں
 خوب ہوگا سنتے ہیں میرا وہاں تو انصاف
 خیر! اچھا شور و شر ہے مجھے تسلیم نہیں
 آرزو تیری بر آئے گی دُعا ہوگی قبول
 اُٹھ کہ ہنگامِ سحر ہے مجھے تسلیم نہیں
 راز فرمائیں قدمِ رنجہ تو جاگ اُٹھے نصیب
 کوئی صورت بھی اگر ہے مجھے تسلیم نہیں

*Reflections - Parineeta Khar***Redemption Beckons****Making Sense of the Lockdown**

Some days back, I had the privilege of listening to a talk through Zoom ; thanks to modern technology, by a prominent Kashmiri writer. The present day much used term QUARANTINE , he remarked , was observed by our ancient spiritual masters and scholars to reach and cross the realms of transcendental peace. The Shaivite guru Abinav Gupt of Kashmir had entered a cave near Beerva with his numerous disciples, perhaps not to appear again. Even Rupa Bhawani seems to have attained the spiritual enlightenment after emerging out of her quarantine away from the hustle, far from the crowd of relatives and acquaintances. They attained the spiritual bliss in their isolation; but we the ordinary mortals shudder to go through the tedious process of retreat, away from the familiar faces and locale and risk getting lost in the strange labyrinth of white corridors among white coats.

Or, for that matter, for a mere mortal being confined to the four walls of numbered rooms or being HOME QUARANTINED is no different from being imprisoned in a jail. We are no Abinav Gupts above the ordinary, with little ordinary needs. We need food, maintenance of the house and assistance to carry on the day-to-day existence. In confinement we may heal our body and

soul, but more than attaining a sainthood, most of us may end up coming out insane and even imbalanced.

It strikes a thinking mind; the lock down is more like Parikshit's bane. Parikshit, who was of Pandav bloodline, had been cursed by the son of a sage, whom the former had slighted in ignorance and arrogance by throwing a serpent round the neck of the sage, who was in deep meditation and could not attend to Parikshit. Parikshit was cursed to be bitten by the same serpent within seven days. The serpent turned out to be Takshak who had his own scores to settle with Pandavas.

Parikshit tried every way in his power to evade death, disguised himself and even got a lofty palace constructed where Takshak's venomous fangs could not reach. In lock down, are not we helpless mortals trying everything to beat this Takshak of uncertainty and even death? The mankind as a whole has been garlanded by this Takshak called COVID-19, hiding and fortifying itself in the shape of vaccines and medicines, like remdesivir etc. to escape the fatal bite.



Parikshit had committed sacrilege but what did we do? Let us delve deep inside our souls and search for an answer, why and who cursed the mankind and why do we have this Corona Takshak like Albatross round our necks challenging our very existence. Was it our arrogant aspirations to question the force that plans our destinies? The mankind is intoxicated by its scientific achievements but we are rendered helpless, our senses and hands fettered by this invisible enemy.

The glamorous beings, painted lips, vain beauties hiding behind masks we don't and can't hug the loved ones, can't even travel to see and touch them. Every one to himself or herself, sieving the air we breathe, beating the thalis, burning the candles, chanting hymns to run away from the Takshak which is on prowl after us. We tried to keep breathing the pranvayu-the air of vitality.

Parikshit arranged, through the recital of Bhagwat Puraan by Sukh deva, to let him attain gyanaa - the conscious knowledge to spend the rest of his days. Let us find a Sukh Deva who guides us to use the lock down to slowdown the pace of our restless, mad competition. Let us sit and reflect and see inwards. May be the Corona shaped Takshak is a subterfuge provided by the nature to relinquish the sacrileges we have committed. Somebody said that Karma has no menu card; we are served what we deserve. Don't we have too much greed, vanity, contempt, jealousy, malice and arrogance of power and position? Our Karma has

garlanded the whole mankind and we have the curse to suffer like Parikshit. The lock down could be a penance to listen to our inner voices, to reckon what went wrong. Why are the beautiful faces hiding behind the ugly veils of obscurity, the fine diners resorting to learning of recipes. The crores invested in food and beauty industry have gone to dogs. Ferraris and BMWs collecting dust, masters scared to touch the ignition keys - Takshak may be waiting to bite. The glimpses of loved ones are virtual, the chubby cheeks waiting to be caressed. So near - yet so far to wipe the tears from those round baby eyes, even to kiss the pink baby feet. The human being is busy looking after personal wellbeing, often looking the other way when the needy relative calls for help. Takshak may be waiting with open fangs to finish our own being. Parikshit was doomed to die, however lofty the palace he hid in were. But Parikshit died an emancipated man, a gyani- a man of awareness and realization and he succeeded. The inevitable happened - Takshak entered an apple as a worm, grew in size when the apple was cut, became a formidable serpent and finished his job. Parikshit died a realized man at peace with himself.

That was the beginning of the Kalyug - the dark ages. We are perhaps in the era which is the beginning of the end of dark ages; perhaps we have already engulfed ourselves in the hallo of Satyug - the age of truth and trust. In the lockdown we found the roads abandoned and desolate.

Ironically, the flora and fauna flourished. The expanse of earth generously blooming full of green trees. The flowers proclaiming their joy in amazing hues of red, pink and white, perhaps mocking at us. The birds flew in the skies in peaceful relish continuing even mating oblivious to our being behind our grilled balconies because the creation had to be caused. Corona may be the agitating hindrance to human wellbeing, but the life was going on. The mankind rendered insignificant.

Abinav Gupt used the Quarantine to attain the spiritual truth. Rupa Bhawani came out of her lockdown, enlightened as Alakishwari to be worshiped by masses. We will eulogize lockdown as a path bearer and will come out ennobled, mellowed, sobered and trusting human beings. Mankind has gone through wars, plagues and pandemics - this one has given us the opportunity to be the potent influence to usher in a fresh age of content where priorities will change. Relationships will matter. What would we not give, perhaps all our riches and wealth to hug a long lost dear one separated from ages. Lockdown came as Sukh Deva to guide us out of a state of denigration. Someday, somebody will redeem us from the dark night of fear, uncertainties and disparities and let us open our eyes to a gleaming morning of hope where the mankind is not vulnerable and helpless. This is an age where Darwin is proved right- struggle as much as we do, the fittest will survive. And let us pray that we get a valiant Janmejaya, who takes upon himself the

sacred and profane cause to burn all corona Takshaks in the scientific yagna, to finish off the calamity once for all and we stand vindicated.

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My Medical Journey ... From Page 09

first time, treated my own grandfather with assurance, and handled everything creditably.

Until that day I was just Kundan Lal, but after grandfather's uneventful recovery, I suddenly transformed into Doctor K L Chowdhury. People started addressing me as 'Doctor Sahib'. I was no longer a green horn, but a physician in my own right, a doctor who could be trusted.

Notes :

Inguinal hernia is a protrusion of the abdominal cavity contents through the inguinal canal near the groin down into the scrotum. The abdominal contents herniate through a weak spot in the abdominal wall, and cause a bulge near the groin. With the passage of time the hernia progresses and the abdominal contents such as the fat and intestines may descend into the sac and run the risk of being pinched within the hernia, causing intestinal obstruction.

Strangulation of the hernia occurs if the blood supply of the herniating contents also gets pinched, a dangerous situation that may lead to gangrene of the intestines. 



یہ تھ واپو ہالہ منتر غزل موتی لال مسرؤف

گزل

موتی لال مسرؤف

کثن ولگوت، تھن منجڑ چای تھوٹھ
 وٹن ہنڈ نیب تریے پھر جای تھوٹھ
 کور تھ ہے جنتہ آند مالوگ آیمن
 تھیکن لایق تہ کس سرمایہ تھوٹھ
 پین پوتر تنگن چھے پاد کھوٹھ
 دوسے وز میانہ آئی سرپایہ تھوٹھ
 کھنل گو کول تہ ونہ نس وارمہ کلہو
 نیل زانگن شہن بے وایہ تھوٹھ
 نزا کٹر ڈوٹھ بہو، صحتے وچیس منتر
 شہیل شامک کھٹنڈ کمرہ رایہ تھوٹھ
 آنداپے روو رنگ نیے ڈول شبا بس
 گزل مسرؤف تہنترے رایہ تھوٹھ



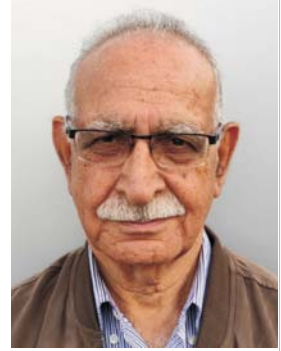
Environment & Life - Prof. B.L.Kaul

Social Organisation in the Rhesus Monkey

The Rhesus is the most common monkey of northern India. Seated a male Rhesus is about 2 to 2½ feet high Females are smaller and slighter in build. In the Himalayas they live from 1000 feet to 8000 feet above the sea level. Protection against cold is provided by a heavier winter coat. They are good swimmers.

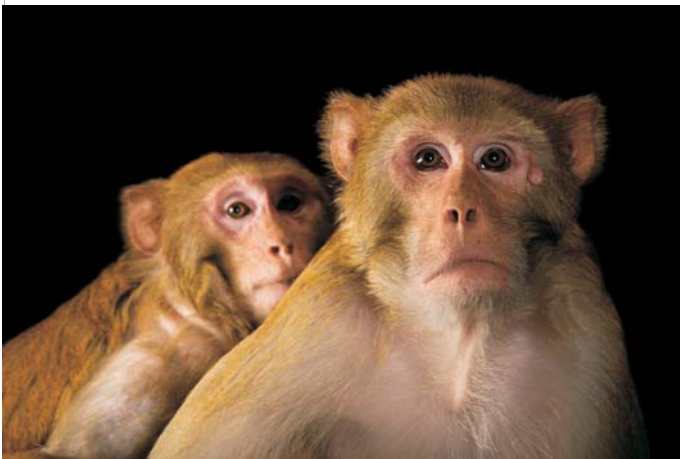
Large troops (a troop is usually a group of 12 to 25 monkeys) live near or in villages and towns, in groves, around tanks and temples. In the forests, they usually keep to the outskirts rarely penetrating into the depth. They have a decided preference for open country. It is a common sight these monkeys mingling with the humans in crowded places like temples, railway platforms and highways accepting food from pilgrims and passengers or stealing it when they can. To raid fields and gardens on a morning or

evening is their common practice. Religious sentiment, however, does not permit check. Contrary to the popular belief that monkeys eat a purely vegetarian diet observations have revealed that in addition to ground plants, flowers and fruits they also consume insects, grubs, spiders and even lizards and frogs. They eat much and fast and store the food in large pouches in their cheeks. This is so because in the wild they are under constant threat from predators and try to consume as much food as possible to swallow it leisurely later on.



Prior to late seventies when export of Rhesus monkeys was banned they were captured on a large scale for export to western countries for laboratory experiments resulting in depopulation of many areas. The population has again grown and we are witnessing an unprecedented interference by them in many towns of northern India.

As stated earlier monkeys live in groups called troops. They are socially organized animals and communicate vocally to express



different emotions such pleasure, anger or fear. They have particular calls to bring the members of a troop together and distinctive cries of caution and warning. Apart from vocal utterances the whole range of emotions may be frequently read in the facial expression of a monkey. Another important means of inter-communication is their habit of fur-picking. It is not, as popularly believed, a hunt for lice or fleas. What is got of this diligent search is usually nothing more than fragments of skin, salt secretions and other foreign matter. From the gentle stimulus it provides fur-picking is, a form of love or courtship. Its repeated indulgence suggests that it is a powerful bond and a means of social communion between members of a troop. The dominant members receive more attention as an expression of loyalty from their juniors.

Earlier it was thought that the chief bond which keeps together a troop of monkeys is persistent sex attraction.



However, recent studies have shown that it is based on infant-mother relationship. Attachment to the mother creates suitable conditions for social learning within the intensely social group where the mother and her young are points of interest to the other members of the group.

The intricate social set-up provides the monkeys maximum advantage in their environment for protection from danger, living room, food and species continuity. It also increases the chances of survival by making available several instead of one pair of eyes and ears to detect the approach of danger. There is shared knowledge of sources of food, and water and safe sleeping places.

The mechanics of social organization follows a certain basic pattern and a system of pyramidal dominance which knits the whole troop together. Social organization within a group is based on the principles of male dominance and at the top there is a dominant male followed by a linear hierarchy among males. Each social unit occupies its own territory in the habitat. In a population for several troops living in one area, each has its home range containing all its requirements of food and shelter. Conflict is more frequent among troops of rhesus monkeys living in urban areas, owing to the restricted availability of suitable habitat and the tension of living in a hostile environment. However, troops of these monkeys living in such circumscribed environments

have an order inter-troop domination, and a fight is avoided by the subordinate group as far as possible. In a study made on the social organization of a troop of rhesus monkeys it was found that there were smaller cohesive units within them. In this troop there was a central dominant group of two males of equal social status.

The leading dominant male, according to the linear hierarchy, ranked higher than the central group males individually, but was jointly dominated by them. The females of the troop lived in these two sub-groups. The members of young but adult males of lower social status formed a third subgroup and all united in defence of the territory and of members of the troop. When the dominant male or leader grows old he is challenged and replaced by another male next in the hierarchy. The old monkey either accepts a subordinate position or leaves the troop to lead a lonely existence.

The rhesus monkeys mate generally from October to December. Gestation lasts 164 days. Offsprings of the same female i.e. brother and sister do not mate with one another. A female usually gives birth to a single young. Occasionally twins are also born. The inter-birth interval is between 12 and 24 month. The major birth season is March to June. From the moment of its birth the baby monkey clings to its mother's body sucking her teats, clutching with its tiny hands and feet the fur of her abdomen, maintaining its hold even when she is jumping about. When she sits down the mother may hold the



baby to her with her arm. There is a greater bond between brothers and sisters. The older daughters help the mother in bringing up her baby. The young ones attain youth in 3 to 5 years. Rhesus monkeys usually have a life span of about 20 years.

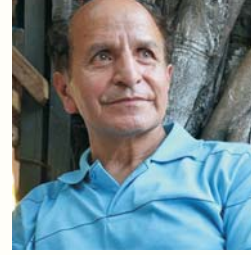
The monkey problem in cities and towns is basically a result of human interference in nature. Large tracts of natural habitat of the wild animals including monkey have been denuded and degraded rendering these helpless creatures homeless. While the other wild animals have withdrawn to deeper areas in the forests the monkeys have invaded the villages, towns or cities begging for food or stealing it. The unnatural food being doled

out to them in the form of bread crumbs and cooked food is proving counter productive. These food stuffs do not provide them the much needed proteins and micro nutrients which the wild berries and other plant materials, insects or spiders provide them in nature.

Having taken to begging and stealing rhesus monkeys do not even make an attempt to go into the wild. They are a common sight and a source of nuisance near temples in cities and towns. As a part of the strategy to combat the monkey menace and to conserve them the following measures are suggested:-

1. Restore of natural habitat by planting trees in degraded forest areas including the stretches around towns.
2. Stop giving food to monkeys. This will force them to go back to the wild when faced with hunger.
3. Catching and trapping monkeys without harm and transporting them into deep protected forest areas where they should be set free. Care should be taken that members of a troop are trapped together and freed together so that their social fabric remains in tact.
4. Stop making inroads into forest areas and as far as possible preventing villagers from taking their cattle into forests for grazing.
5. Avoid road construction and laying of electric wires cables through forest areas inhabited by rhesus monkeys.

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یاد آسمانن هنز

شفیع شوق

وہی

دور۔۔۔ اندگامہ، بے صدا وتہ پود
ہر دگتجار، داتھری داتھر
دہر وایاں وسائ گندان پکان
خوش تہ خوشحال نکو تہ بڈک ساری
حیہ سان آہ رنگہ ریو ڈیشٹھ
سہ تہ بوستو رمنز کڈاں روڈس
رنگ برنگو چیز، باگرم ساری

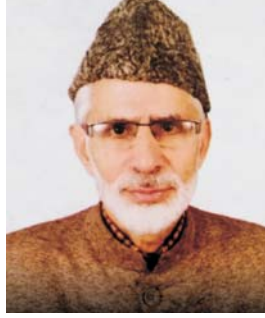
○

رہ زھوٹس منز مؤ شمت۔۔۔ لیتہ مونجہ گو مت
سو کھل موکل بہ دور
تاہس، چھو لہس
دوہے چھم دو دچھلان تہ پوشہ ورشن کران
دوہ چھس بہ رہہ رہہ پٹن دیوتی وٹست زانان
تہ ہندین پاپن پٹھ اندر رک اندری اسان

بُجُی نُو کَاسِی جَاسِی

وَنَی کَیَاہ

جَاسِی اَہمَد جَاسِی



بُوڑے نہ کاتِیہ زاری
وَنے کِیَاہ
ظریف احمد ظریف

وَنُہی تُو وَنُہن شُوبِ کَمِ اَنوَانُو وَنَی کَیَاہ
رَی تُو کَالِی مَٹِی مَ وُندُکِی سَامَانُو وَنَی کَیَاہ

وَنے ہے تہ وُن شُوبِ کَمِ عَنوَانِہ وَنے کِیَاہ
”رہتہ کالہ مٹھم وندکی سامانہ وَنے کِیَاہ“

گُدرُن بَنُہن وَنُہی تُو دِیخ مَ تَانُو وَنَی کَیَاہ
رَی تُو کَالِی مَٹِی مَ وُندُکِی سَامَانُو وَنَی کَیَاہ

گُدرُن بَنُہن وَنے ہے تہ دِکھ مَاطَعِنِہ وَنے کِیَاہ
”رہتہ کالہ مٹھم وندکی سامانہ وَنے کِیَاہ“

جَنرَتِ عِی کَاشِیر بے-نَجَیر پَوجِ سَولُ مَٹَیو دَوپ
رَی تُو کَالِی یِی مَ وُندُکِی سَامَانُو وَنَی کَیَاہ

جَنت چہ کَشِیر بے نَظِیر پَوز سَولُہ مَٹِیو دَوپ
رہتہ کالہ یِیو ڈل دَہس کَہے کَہانہ وَنے کِیَاہ

شَب رَوجِ جَوخُوم کُوت جَویگُم کَیَاہ مَہِ حَاصِلِ آَم
اَنبَار کَرتَہ تَھو وَنے وُندُکِی سَامَانُو وَنے کِیَاہ

شَب رَوجِ جَویگُم کُوت جَویگُم کَیَاہ مَہِ حَاصِلِ آَم
اَنبَار کَرتَہ تَھو وَنے وُندُکِی سَامَانُو وَنے کِیَاہ

عُوتِ رَا دُ آَسِی آَمَدَن پَوجِ خَربُ پَنَاہ جَیوٹ
بَربُ بَربُ تِی رَوجِن تَوتِی عَری بَانُو وَنَی کَیَاہ

تَھوٹِ رَا آَسِی آَمَدَن پَوز خَربُ پَنَاہ زِیوٹ
بَربُ بَربُ تِی رَوجِن تَوتِی عَری بَانُو وَنے کِیَاہ

نَی لَانِ آَدَمِ جَادِ اَیجُکِ جَویجَارِنِ وِول
سَورُی گَوتَھُسِ آَسُہنِ وُسنِ اَسْمَانُو وَنَی کِیَاہ

نِیلَانِ آَدَمِ زَادِ اَزِیگِ زَاوَرِجَارِنِ وِول
سَورُی گَوتَھُسِ آَسُہنِ وُسنِ اَسْمَانُو وَنے کِیَاہ



Saints & Sages - Autar Krishan Trisal Mata Roopa Bhawani

In the early seventeenth century, a Kashmiri Pandit named Madhav Joo Dhar lived in Srinagar. Madhav Joo was of a deeply religious and philosophy temperament, and his daily life was conducted in an impeccably religious spirit. He worshipped the Supreme Being (Ishwara) in the form of the Divine Mother Sharika (Durga).

In Srinagar, there is a hill known as Hari Parvat or Sharika Parvat where the Goddess Sharika is worshipped since ancient times. Legend relates that long



ago some demon troubled the local people, who prayed to Goddess Durga for protection. She took the form of a Sharika (Maina) bird and dropped a large chunk of earth on the



entrance to the cave of the demons to seal them inside the hill. She then took Her abode on the hill to ensure that they did not escape. This gave the name Sharika Parvat to the hill. The Goddess is represented there by the Sri Chakra (a regular geometrical mystical pattern) in sandy rock, which is anointed with red lead (Sindur). The deity is also called Chakreshwari. Regular worship has been offered at this shrine for centuries.

To this shrine of the Divine Mother Sharika, Madhav Joo came every day to worship in the auspicious hour of Brahma Muhurta (pre-dawn). He would chant Her Holy Name, with his face glowing with devotion and his entire being absorbed in Her worship. For hours he would be so transported, the fire of devotion lighting up his entire being with Divine radiance. Thus did this devotee of the Divine Mother pass his days.

It is said that on the first day of the Navaratri (the nine days dedicated to the worship of the Divine Mother Durga) in the

month of Ashwin, in the year 1620, Madhav Joo arrived for worship at midnight, to uninterruptedly worship on this most auspicious occasion. He commenced his worship and, with all reverence and attentive detail, he glorified the Supreme Goddess, his heart filled with adoration. When his worship was complete, the Divine Mother is said to have appeared before him in the form of a radiant girl child.



On seeing this divine child, Madhav was so filled with intense joy and bliss that he lost all consciousness of his external surroundings, and tears of joy and devotion flowed from his eyes. He understood that the mother of the Universe, Mahamaya, was Herself in front of him in the form of this child,

There upon he worshipped the girl, picking flowers at Her feet and incense before Her. With fatherly love he offered Her sweets. The Mother was pleased with the simplicity and love of Her devotee, and granted him a boon. Madhav requested Mother, 'Since you have appeared before me in the form of a child, take birth in my house as my daughter. The Divine Mother granted the boon and vanished. So goes the legend of the birth of Roopa Bhavani.

In the following year i.e. 1621, in the early morning on Poornima (full moon) in the month of Jyeshtha, a daughter was born to Madhav Joo's wife. He named his daughter Alakshyeshvari, which means one who is imperceptible and

indescribable, it refers to the Goddess in the formless non-dual aspect.

In her father's house, Alaksheshvari's years of childhood were passed in the company of devotees. Madhav Joo was held in high esteem and spiritual seekers came from far away provinces to meet him. Alakshyeshvar's spirituality blossomed early in these favourable conditions. As she grew older the spiritual tendencies within her became increasingly manifest. Her father, Madhav Joo, himself became her guru and gave her spiritual initiation. Nevertheless, in accordance with the prevailing customs of the time, her father arranged her marriage to a young man of the nearby Sapru family. However, Alakshyeshvar's married life was unhappy. Her husband Hiranand Sapru, totally lacked all understanding of Alakshyeshvari's spiritual nature, and her mother-in-law, Somp Kunj, had a cruel disposition. Alakshyeshvar's life in this house was difficult and joyless. Her mother-in-law was always finding fault

with her. Once she accused Alakshyeshvari of going out at midnight, and made Hiranand suspicious of his wife's fidelity.

The truth was that at midnight Alakshyeshvari would go to perform her sadhana (spiritual practice) at the shrine of Mother Sharika on Hari Parvat. One day Hiranand followed her to see where she went at night. Alakshyeshvari knew this. When she had nearly reached the shrine, she turned around and asked Hiranand to join her. However, as he was steeped in ignorance, he is said to have beheld a vast expanse of water, impossible to cross, between himself and her and disheartened, he was forced to return home.

Yet another incident is related of her life in her in-laws' home. One day, on the occasion of some festival, Madhav sent his daughter a pot of rice pudding (kheer). Alakshyeshvari's mother-in-law, on seeing the kheer spoke sarcastically. 'What will I do with this small pot of kheer? I have so many relatives, this is hardly sufficient for them.' Alakshyeshvari replied, 'Please give this kheer to as many persons as you like, but don't look inside the pot'. Somp Kunj began to ladle out the kheer and gave it to everyone she knew. But the supply of kheer seemed endless! Finally, furious with anger, Somp Kunj looked inside the pot to find just a few grains sticking to its sides

The next day at dawn, Alakshyeshvari cleaned the pot, and placed it in the flowing current of the

Vitasta river, speaking this 'My father is doing his morning prayers (Sandhya) at the Diddmar Ghat. Go and stop there.' The pot floated down the Vitasta river and stopped exactly where Madhav Joo was doing his Sandhya. Madhav picked up the pot and took it home.

Even after seeing such miraculous incidents, not just once, but many times Somp Kunj stubbornly refused to change her ways towards Alakshyeshva. Hiranand also remained foolish and ignorant. Finally, when living there became unbearable, Alakheshvari left her husband's house never to return. It is said that this Sapru family's fortunes rapidly declined thereafter.

Alakshyeshvari renounced her father's home as well, and decided to seek the eternal abode of the Supreme Being. She wanted to become absorbed in sadhana. Seeking a solitary retreat, she selected a location to the north-east of Srinagar, known by its ancient name Jyestha Rudra. Here she did intense tapasya (austerities) for twelve and a half years, and began to glow with the fire of spirituality. At this point, people, attracted by her spiritual radiance, began to come to her in such large numbers that she decided to leave the place for a more solitary retreat

She moved to a village Mani Gam, in north Kashmir, on the banks of the Ganges in the foothills of the Himalayas. On festival days many people would gather at Mani Gam for a dip in the sacred waters. In these beautiful surroundings

Alakshyeshvari chose to do her sadhana. On a forested hill-top, far from the village, she made a hermitage for herself. For a long time she remained in solitude, deep in spiritual practices.

It is said that none of the villagers at Mani Gam knew of Alakshyeshvar's existence, until a certain miraculous incident revealed her presence to them.

A cowherd boy used to take his cows to graze at a place which, unknown to him, was close to where Alakshyeshvari was absorbed in meditation. The boy noticed that a beautiful white cow left the herd every day at noon, and later returned on her own accord. One day he decided to follow the cow to see where she went.

Following the cow, he reached a clearing in the forest. There he saw a beautiful woman dressed in ochre robes seated in meditation, her long hair flowing loosely, her face shining with a heavenly lustre and her eyes filled with a divine light. The cow, as though under a spell, stopped before the radiant ascetic. The ascetic

woman got up and lovingly caressed the cow. The cow of her own accord poured its milk into the ascetic's bowl until it was full.

On seeing this wonderful scene, the cowherd boy lost consciousness. When he milked the white cow he found to his astonishment that she gave even more milk than usual.

The cowherd confided his experiences to Lal Chandra, the village head. Lal was filled with reverence and devotion. He located Alakshyeshvari, and went daily to serve her in whichever way he could. By this time she had completed twelve and a half years of spiritual practice in that hermitage.

We will from here refer to her as Bhavani or Bhagavati (the Goddess). This is keeping with the common belief in Kashmir that Alakshyeshvari was an incarnation of the Goddess Durga.

Lal Chandra told the villagers about Bhavani and the miraculous happening attributed to her. But when she began to receive a great deal of public attention, she left the village, preferring to continue her spiritual practices in solitude. She went to dwell in a hut on the banks of the Shakhkol river. Even there she attracted devotees.

Once, a spiritual seeker fascinated by her aura of spirituality asked her, 'What is your name?' Bhavani replied, 'My name is Roopa (one who has realized her own True Self)'. The seeker further questioned her, 'Why do you wear this ochre dress?' Bhagavati replied, 'This ochre represents the state of being in which the individual



Mata Rupa Bhawani at Chashme Sahibi near Chashme Shahi

soul has taken the colour of the Supreme Being.'

Bhavani lived for many years on the banks of the Shahkol, absorbed in meditation. Finally, when large numbers of devotees again began to flock around her, she once more moved away to a quieter spot in the village of Vaskora. Legend says that the Naga (snake) Vasuki, did his tapasya in Vaskora to attain the Grace of Shiva. When his sadhana bore fruit, he asked Lord Shiva for a boon 'May I always adorn you as a necklace.' Bhagavati greatly liked this spot and began to dwell there.

Bhavani's grace now began to shower on her numerous devotees. Many miracles are attributed to her. There was a young boy, blind from birth, who served her with great devotion. Bhavani's compassionate heart was moved by his sad condition. She gave him a stick and asked him to dig the earth with it. He immediately obeyed her, many devotees gathered nearby watching. Soon water began to appear from the hole that was dug. Bhavani said to the young boy, 'Wash your eyes with the water that has come forth.' As the boy did so, his sight was restored and the crowd of devotees were amazed. Bhavani had a brother, Lal Joo, who was very devoted to her and took her as his guru. Lal's son, Bal, began to stay with her in her service. Once, Lal requested Bhavani to educate his illiterate son. Bhavani gave the boy a pen and some paper and ordered him to write. Thereupon, miraculously, the boy began

to write fluently like a highly educated person. The devotees were overwhelmed by this transformation. In Vaskora, Bhavani began to give spiritual instruction to Bal Joo Dar and Adnan Muttoo in the form of poetical verses, called Vakhs. One hundred and forty-five of her Vakhs have been transmitted to us.

Bhavani returned to Srinagar on the entreaties of her numerous devotees, and began to live in Safakadal. Many years had elapsed, and Bhavani now yearned to be released from her earthly body. On the Saptami Tithi, in the month of Magha, in the year 1721, Bhavani's soul took flight forever. The legend relates how her devotees, filled with grief, carried her body towards the cremation ground. On the way they met the village head who, on seeing the funeral procession, asked whom they were carrying. On hearing that it was Roop Bhavani, he was very startled, for he had just seen Bhavani walking down the road by which he came. The devotees looked inside the coffin and found nothing there but some alak (locks-of hair) and some flowers. The alak are even today worshipped with great reverence.

Although she is not with us now, Roopa Bhavani's Vakhs are so vibrant with her presence that on reading them one feels that she is very near, giving knowledge to her children with powerful words of renunciation, and dispelling ignorance with the weapon of Eternal Truth. May she guide us on the true path of knowledge, towards the Divine Light.



یاदन ہُنَد آادن گام

گज़ل

پرم ناٹھ شاد



یادن ہُنَد آادن گام

غزل

پرم ناٹھ شاد

نجرن تِی مچر آاڤ ہے سَدورن چُھ ہُران جوش
تجرن چُھ ڤُڙان ڤاڤولون، کبرن چِی ڤڤلان ڤوش

یم ڤاڤ ڤُھان نار تِی تَوَیہر چُھان ڤہ
ڤی چا جِی نجرن ڊَڙج تِی جبان کر سڤج ڤاموش

لچِی لال کَٹرِیٹ ڤڤڤکارن مڤڤ لڤون موش
ڤچ ڤرَڤن ڤی مچِی ماچ ڤڤڤان ہال نِی چُھس ہوش

سڤڤ سَوَڤ ڤہر نور سہر دُور دِگار شام
ڤوٹچ ڤاڤ ڤڤڤڤن ڤول دِنیٹ چول ہڤ دِلوک سَنٹوش

کَٹس اڤجَڤان مانِی مُدا جِڤدِگی لاچار
تن دَوَڤ من دَوَڤ لا تَوَڤ چِہ چِگر گوش

رَږ رُود گولن سَڤ شِہل تَوَدِر تچر شاد
شڤنَم ڤُڙون ہرمڤڤ تِی سَږمال ڤراموش

نظرن تہ مژر آو ہے سدرن چھ ہران جوش
تجرن چھ ڈڈان داولن قبرن چھ بھولان پش

یم ڤاڤ ڈہان نار تم تاپہر ڈہان دہہ
ڤے چھا ز نظر ڈج تہ زبان کر سپر خاموش

لہوہ لال کترہ پونہ کارن مونہ لہن موش
ڤڙہ ڤرَڤن ڤی مچِی ماچ ڤڤڤان ہال نِی چُھس ہوش

سوکھ ساور ڤہر نور سحر دُور دِگر شام
ڤڙہ ڤاڤ ڤوٹچ ڤول دِنیٹ چول ہڤ دِلوک سَنٹوش

کٹس اڤڤان معنہ مُدا زندگی لاچار
تن دَوَڤ من دَوَڤ لا تَوَڤ چِہ چِگر گوش

رَږ رُود گلن سَڤ شِہل تَوَدِر تچر شاد
شڤنَم ڤُڙون ہرمڤڤ تِی سَږمال ڤراموش



Short Story - Robin Chowdhury

Visitors in the time of a Pandemic

The story I am about to tell will seem curious to you and will raise many questions in your mind. When these events took place, I was excited and thrilled in a way and to an extent that is difficult to describe. One is never in total control and so the details were surprising and the element of uncertainty was part of it all. On the whole, however, it seemed to me like a promise fulfilled. Only later did questions arise in my mind as to the type of reality and its significance.

In the main, I had some visitors, and as they appeared, there was no doubt that they were expected. The manner and sequence of their appearance was, however, charming and casual and not at all burdened with formality of any kind. They seemed to know what I was thinking even as I had yet to speak. Their expressions and postures conveyed the answers to my unspoken thoughts. And although we recognised and acknowledged each other, what was the status of our identities as each of us progressed through life? Were they of a different time? Was there a purpose of their visit? How much did they understand our place and our times? They seemed to ignore our technology and gadgets as irrelevant. There was no awareness or curiosity about how our lives had been changed, for better or for worse. Indeed, it

may be they had better ways of communicating. Whatever the reason, they also ignored the fact of the pandemic that continues to cause so much havoc all over the world, our world. Why was this so? However, I would like to emphasise that, at the time of these events, I had no such doubts or questions. I was happy and had no need for external information or for any device to obtain it. It was pure human to human communication at its simplest and best.

Let me tell you what I was doing that day before these events unfolded. After my retirement, I patiently developed a routine for morning walks at different locations in Figtree and Wollongong. Some locations provide a very quiet and calm environment. Sounds of birds and insects only highlight the peaceful surroundings and allow a free flow of thoughts whether one is just seated on a bench or walking.

On sunny mornings, one is tempted to drive to the beach and park the car in a designated area before starting the enjoyable activities of a morning out. One is drawn towards the vast expanse of the sea. The surface of the ocean shimmers as the play of restless waves holds the



attention. It is rewarding to observe even for a short time. After this short indulgence, I do simple exercises and then take a brisk walk. I may make some overseas phone calls to close relatives on some occasions or write some text messages or listen to some news. This only highlights the extent to which we are addicted to our devices, almost enslaved by them.

When I free myself from that, leave the phone in the car or switch it off, I can devote myself to some reflection. This is the most important benefit of going out of the house to an area closer to nature and free from urban noise at least in the early morning. Some long forgotten events, however insignificant may surface at such times. Acquaintances and friends from a distant past may come into focus as part of these past events, however minor or insignificant. I have lived for significant periods of time in several countries and have visited many others for brief periods. Along the way, I have encountered situations and people some of whom have, no doubt, left deep impressions on me. Yet, the only people with whom I communicate consciously are a small bunch of kith and kin and some friends. And indeed we have a lot of memories to share, much to cherish and be grateful for.

One wonders whether there is some interaction going on with all those others. How do we communicate with those times and people who are not even on the radar? Perhaps such communication does happen in subtle ways. Does the

subconscious mind have its own equivalent of electronic communication? If only we knew. Would we then explore further and be tempted to unlock those secrets?

The Covid-19 pandemic has profoundly affected life all over the world since January 2020. Australia, like other countries, announced strict restrictions on travel and on ordinary activities of people. Lockdown was enforced in some cities or particular areas in a city which were considered to be hot spots of infection. Social life has been severely curtailed and there has been a dramatically adverse impact on the national economy. I did severely curtail my walking for some weeks. After several weeks, the restrictions in our region were relaxed to an extent that I could continue my walks again.

Nevertheless, the Covid-19 pandemic continues to affect everyone and dealing with this continuing adversity has become part of individual and community expectations. Life has become monotonous and dull and get-togethers are discouraged. The probability of visitors to home for social purposes is extremely low.

On this particular day, on reaching home, I was looking forward to nothing more than carrying out home chores and indulging in recreations like watching news or reading. The street in front of our house was quiet as is usual for a late morning on a week day. Although it was a clear day, the light seemed very soft,

gentle and subdued. No sign of the sun's rays. One might as well have been in a densely forested estate. I came out of the front door and stood there for a moment looking towards the street.

In the soft light I saw a person coming along the driveway towards me. Immediately I recognised Roshan and thought: "That is so nice; he has at last accepted my request and is here, saying so in person".

However, you must know that I had no awareness of this visitor or my invitations to him before I stepped out of my front door. What I am now telling you is of my awareness and thought process in the immediate aftermath of seeing a person walking along the driveway towards me. "This is my second or third request to him" I mused, "and now he is here".

Now I must again tell you further of my thought process at the time. Unbeknown to my invitee, I had wanted to get him to come because of my perception that he had a hard life in material terms. His life was blighted by lack of money and means and I had no doubt that it was the reality and not just my assumption.

So he would stay with me. He would help manage things effortlessly without realising he was doing so. We would navigate our existence together. He would not have any material hardship. However, it would be grossly insulting for him to even suspect that he had been encouraged to come because he was considered to be in dire need. He would continue to live here

and need never know my motivation nor would anyone else know. By his gestures, my friend acknowledges me and my joy at seeing him and appears to say, "Relax, I will be fine"

As I was rationalising these thoughts I saw another person coming along the drive towards me. I said to myself, "Ah, my friend Vibushan has come too just as I wanted him to. That is so good."

I must tell you, however, that before these events, I had no such awareness of expecting him to come or even having invited him. I am only telling you of what I thought in those precious moments of the encounter.

I immediately thought of alerting him that, in his conversations with Roshan, he should somewhat cautious as to any enquiries from Roshan. I seemed to message him and say, "Please, feel free and enjoy the company of all including Roshan. But if you find out or suspect the real reason why I have invited Roshan, do not share it with him". With a gesture and a nod, he conveyed that my message had been received and that I need not worry. It was almost as if he considered my request superfluous. The two of them were in effortless interaction and conversation and seemed to be intimate. Perhaps I was wrong in assuming they were relative strangers to each other.

At this instant two more things happened almost simultaneously. A third person also came along the drive. This was Rajinder and I was as happy to see him as the others. At that moment I felt that

he too was invited by me and expected. As he joined the other two and they interacted effortlessly, I noticed a huge shape, like a billboard or a sculpture being brought up. It seemed impressive and obviously expensive and it was placed, with confidence at a specific location, a focal point at the front of the house. The location was directly in front and to my right, some 7 meters away. And I exclaimed almost aloud. "What is this extravagance, procuring a huge art object, an impressive painting of that size and importance for this occasion". As quickly as I had thought this and perhaps said it aloud, I rationalised that it was ok. I should not make a fuss and I had some idea, perhaps just a guess, which would have done this. Thinking of it now, I wonder if it was indeed accompanying the visitors, part of their plan, appro or even a gift. The three visitors did not seem to be perturbed by it nor did they seem to sense a change in my expression or demeanour to surprise and then to acceptance.

Even as this huge object was being installed, there was a flurry of activity and several panels of similar size were being moved along and up the driveway and placed end to end as panels with edges touching each other and joining up with the art object at the dominant corner. Thus these panels formed the perimeter of a marquee without a roof, separating the space from any view from the road beyond.

It was as if privacy was being ensured for the meeting involving all of us.

And I was thinking, "Is this going to be a bigger gathering? Are a lot more people invited this day? Is it going to be a big party, after all?" As time passed, so to speak, since time was virtually at a standstill, I observed no one else. Our conversations had started, if you can characterise the silent communications as such. It was an animated, thoughtful group but there was earnestness in the air to moderate the joy that I felt and assumed that others did too. I wondered how my three guests, of similar age to mine, appeared to be youthful adults in good physical and mental health with no signs of ageing. Through some kind of thought transference perhaps, my question was heard and answered by one and all during our conversations. The answer was given and received in a subtle way as we talked of the times when we were of the age represented in the make-up of the guests. I was put at ease because, for the moment, I too belonged to the younger age group as I was already feeling that way.

Dear reader, I think you will realise that much remained mysterious to me during these events and yet I felt comfortable and joyous. It goes without saying that we exchanged some notes about past times and how life developed for each of us. Those details are too numerous and long to form part of this short story. It is hard to recall the full details of this engaging get-together as I was excited throughout and in a state of high emotion even as I was puzzling about various aspects of the events. Yet, I can

state some snippets of our interaction.

Roshan said, "I hope you will be happy and comfortable for me to call you Robin. I knew you by a couple of affectionate names used by the close family and friends. However, much time has passed for you and you have been known as Robin for many years although I also know you still feel honoured to be addressed in affectionate terms by kith and kin and close friends."

He continued, "You have correctly called me by the name I had when we were together. You expected to see me as my older self but a choice of the happiest period of our association was made. We were close and carefree and, if we had to meet, best to enjoy that stage of life. You are right to wonder about me arriving here as if I am a young man. Moreover, you still dwell in your mind on the difficulties and troubles we faced as we got older and you even wonder if anything could have been done to avoid those hardships. Well, we were tested hard, confronted obstacles and many awkward and even tragic things happened as we passed through other stages of life. Some of us encountered serious health issues and reached the end-game sooner than others. What you are seeing today, in this encounter should tell you that a life is lived to a finite end but that there can be renewal too". Well, to be honest, I am not a credulous person but I still enjoyed this type of talk without question.

Vibushan followed a similar thread of conversation. He said "Robin, I recall the

good times as well as you do. Perhaps some details are clearer to me. We had some amazing times together. From chance acquaintance to friendship we explored intellectual concepts, talked of reading, poetry, books and even politics and ideology. I know you were somewhat sceptical of my dalliance with political ideas such as socialism."

"Indeed, those aspirations of mine did not count for much. You saw me in my difficult days even in youth. It was then that circumstances separated us for the first time. You are right to assume that we had the first break in our friendship and, in any case, it was unrealistic to maintain a long distance connection. However, you should not feel guilty about any of that. There were some happy years also when you were away overseas although that phase of my life was also not to last.

You have indeed heard that, in my senior years also, I suffered in various ways and got estranged from reality a couple of times. In the concluding phases of that life, I was away from my beloved Kashmir valley. Many years later you tried to find out what happened to me and you were not successful. It is difficult for me tell you about all that now. You will appreciate that I come here today as the happy, youthful person of the early years so that you will again feel the joy of a budding friendship revisited.

Rajinder listened to these statements with fascination. He was also present in his youthful self. We got to know each other in younger days and a promising association

developed. We regarded each other as friends. However, our paths diverged. We went in different directions. Moreover, our connection was not of an emotional nature. From time to time one or the other would initiate a dialogue via correspondence. Consequently I had been thinking of him during my retirement years and especially the last couple of years. There was no unfinished business between us and his presence on this occasion provided some balance from the richness and depth of emotions that permeated the other conversations.

The events that I have described ended as abruptly as they started. Ever since then I have been trying to make sense of everything and much that I have expressed is due to those efforts over weeks. Dear reader, I am unable to tell you much more except to admit that this is not a problem requiring a solution. It is, in fact, the other way round. I have started to understand this in terms of future incarnations of friends from my past. However, there is much more to explore.

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हना सूचिव !!

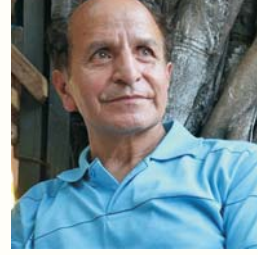
शुर्यन कथ छु राह खारुन ?
तोह्य छिवु तिमन सुत्य काँशिर्य पाँठ्य कथ
करान ? शुर्यन सुती योत क्या ? तोह्य छिवु पनुनि
वाँसि हुंघन सुत्य ति काँशिर्य पाँठ्य कथ करान ।

हना सूचिव !

याद आस्मानन हुंज

विह्य

शफी शोक्र



दूर ... अंद गामु, बे सदा वतु पौद
हर्दु गुतजार, दाथरी दाथर
दहरु वायान विसान गिंदान पकान
ख्वश तु ख्वशहाल, निक्य तु बँड्य साँरी
हुबु सान आयि रंगु र्युव डीशिथ
बु ति बोस्तूर मंजु कडान रूदुस
रंग बरंगी चीज़, बाँगरिम साँरी



रबि छ्वटस मंज मोशमुत ...

लतु म्वंजि गोमुत

स्वखुल म्वखुल बु दिवुर

तुलहस, छोलुहस

द्वहय छिम दूदु छलान तु पोशि वशुन करान
वौ छुस बु रसु रसु पनुन देवत्य वटुस्त ज्ञानान
तु यिहुंघन पापन प्यठ अँदरी अँदरी असान



प्रभुजी जो करता है अच्छा ही करता है

एक राजा की कथा।

म.क.धर



यह कहानी एक नगर के राजा और उसके मंत्री की है। कहते हैं राजा के इस मंत्री के निकट जब भी कोई अच्छी या बुरी घटना घटित होती तो यह मंत्री कहता। हरि कृपा। प्रभुजी जो करता है अच्छा ही करता है। एक दिन की बात है जब राजा दरबार में पधार रहा था वह अचानक गिर पड़ा और उसकी एक हाथ की कनिष्ठ उंगली टूट गई। मंत्री के मुख से अनायास निकल गया। हरि कृपा। प्रभुजी जो करता है अच्छा ही करता है। इस बात पर राजा को बहुत क्रोध आया और कहा कि मेरी उंगली टूट गई और आप कहते हो प्रभु कृपा। राजा ने मंत्री को कारागार में बंद करने का आदेश दिया। यह आदेश सुन कर मंत्री ने फिर वही बात दोहराई। हरि कृपा, हरि कृपा। प्रभुजी जो करता है अच्छा ही करता है।

राजा की उंगली का उपचार किया गया परन्तु ठीक न होने पर अंततः राजा की उंगली काटनी पड़ी। कुछ समय बीत जाने पर एक दिन राजा अपने साथियों के साथ जंगल में शिकार करने गया। जंगल में बहुत दूर जाने पर राजा अपने साथियों से बिछड़ गया। कुछ देर चलने के बाद राजा एक आदिवासियों की बस्ती में जा पहुंचा। उन आदिवासियों को यह ज्ञात नहीं था कि वह राजा है कारण वश उन्होंने राजा को बंदी बनाया। राजा ने आग्रह किया कि वह नगर का राजा है परन्तु उनकी भाषा न समझने के कारण उन्होंने राजा की एक न सुनी। संयोगवश इन का कोई कार्यक्रम चल रहा था जिसमें मानव बलि चढ़ाना आवश्यक था। यह निर्णय लिया गया कि इसी मानव की बलि चढ़ानी चाहिए। राजा को नहला धुला के बलि के लिए तैयार किया गया। जब पूजा आरम्भ करने का समय आया तो देखा कि इस की एक उंगली कटी है। सरदार ने कहा कि देवता इस की बलि स्विकार नहीं करेंगे क्योंकि यह मनुष्य अंगहीन है। राजा को तुरंत रिहा कर दिया गया। इतने में राजा के साथी वहां पहुंच गए और राजा को अपने साथ ले गए।

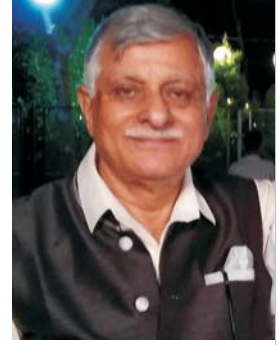
दरबार में पहुंचते ही राजा ने अपने मंत्री को रिहा करने का और सम्मानपूर्वक सभा में लाने का आदेश दिया। जब मंत्री सभा में उपस्थित हुआ तो राजा यह कहते क्षमा याचना करने लगा कि मंत्री महोदय आप जो कहते हैं ठेठ सत्य है। प्रभुजी जो करता है अच्छा ही करता है, उस समय अगर मेरी उंगली नहीं कटती तो आज मैं जीवित नहीं होता। परन्तु जब आप को दंड दिया गया तब भी आप ने दंड स्विकार किया और कहा। हरि कृपा, प्रभुजी जो करता है अच्छा ही करता है। उस बात का तात्पर्य क्या है। मंत्री ने मुस्कराते हुए उत्तर दिया। महाराज अगर मैं कारागार में नहीं होता तो अवश्य आपके साथ ही होता, आप को कट्टी उंगली ने जीवन दान दिया परन्तु मेरे सभी अंग बराबर है और आदिवासी उस समय आपके बदले मेरी बलि चढ़ाते। इसीलिए प्रभुजी की इच्छा में सदा प्रसन्न रहने में ही हमारी भलाई है।

तात्पर्य: ईश्वर जो करता है जब करता है जैसे करता है सदा अच्छे केलिए ही करता है।

Grandma's Stories

दादी माँ की कहानियाँ - नानि हंज़ु कथु

Content Source: kashir talmih & kashir lukû kathû ~ Publications of J&K Academy of Art, Culture & Languages. Transliteration & Re-written for Children by M.K.Raina]



Folk Tales of Kashmir

Golden Fish & the Fisherman

It was Kishmish's birthday today, English birthday to be precise. Her birthday as per Kashmiri Pandits' Panchang fell five days back. Kashmiri Pandits consider the Panchang birthday as the real one. It coincides with the lunar calendar. They prepare tãhâr (yellow rice) on this day and after pooja, give a part of it to birds and dogs. But the one as per English calendar is celebrated at a bigger scale as per modern trend and the wishes of the children. They receive lots of good wishes and gifts from their friends on the day. Usually, evenings are reserved for ceremonies like cake-cutting and dinner party and dance and music.



So children were late. Grandma was also there, busy at the party, embracing and hugging all children including those who were invited for the celebrations and the dinner. Return gifts were distributed by her only.

It was about 9.00 O'Clock in the night when they got free and assembled for Grandma's story.



Grandma started.

Dapaan, Once upon a time there was a fisherman. He was very poor and hardly managed two square meals for him and his wife. He had no children. His wife was rude and ill-mannered. She would abuse him off and on, for not earning much and for not providing her luxuries other women in the neighbourhood were enjoying. Fisherman would listen to all this but not utter a single word. He was scared of his wife.

"Oh, was she so bad?" Babloo asked Grandma.

Yes, she was. That is why there was

no peace between the two", said Grandma.

Fisherman would go for fishing every day, with the net on his head and the basin under arm, toil for the day and earn a little. His wife used to go to her neighbours' place to pound grains or get them water from the stream and earn a little. They had a small hut to live in, without any furnishing or furniture. The total property they had in the hut was a small stone mortar, a winnowing basket, a sieve and a wooden mortar. Time passed and both of them started getting older.

"I have not seen a mortar made of wood. Where can I see that?" Said Mahima to Grandma.



"I have a photograph in my album. I will show you tomorrow. Remind me", said Grandma.

One day, the fisherman went to a big river to catch fish. He cast his net over and over again but without success. He could not catch a single fish. He started weeping. He was scared of going home empty handed, for the fear of his wife. In the meantime, dark clouds overcast the sky and there was thunder with lightening.

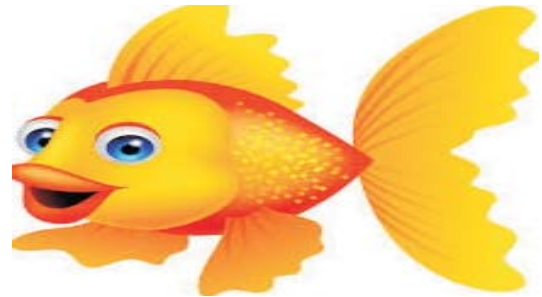
Fisherman cast his net a last time to

try his luck. As he collected the net, he found a big golden fish in it. As soon as he took the fish in his hands, it started talking like a human.



Fish said to fisherman, "O' you nobleman, don't catch me. Let me go back into the river." Fisherman was surprised. He had never seen a fish talking like a human being. He said, "I have been here since morning. I have not caught a single fish. How can I let you go? What will I carry back home? Moreover, you are golden. I will present you to the king and I am sure, he will reward me well.

Fish said, "If you leave me, I promise to give you whatever you demand. I am the queen of all rivers. Fish of all rivers are my subjects." Fisherman thought for a while. He pitied the poor fish and dropped her back into the river. He reached home empty handed. His wife was waiting for him. He narrated his story to her. She was furious. She said, "You are a fool. You are good for nothing. Who lets a fish go like



that, that too a golden fish? She has lied. She has made a fool of you by telling you a false story. Have you ever heard of any queen fish in the river? If she was really a queen and if you believe her, why didn't you ask her for some food for the dinner?"

Next day, the fisherman left for the river again. He wanted to test the queen fish. He called the queen fish loudly. Queen fish appeared before him and said, "I am here. What can I do for you?"

Fisherman was excited. He said, "Send me food for seven days." Fish dived back into the river.

On reaching home, fisherman saw a number of cauldrons containing varieties of food ready to be served. Food was sufficient for seven days. Both fisherman and his wife stopped going to work any more and enjoyed the feasts.

After seven days, fisherman's wife said to him, "Go and ask the river queen for a bungalow, one like the king has. We have never had a good place to live in."

Fisherman went to the river bank and



called the golden fish. She appeared and said, "Tell me nobleman, what do you want?" Fisherman said, "My wife wants for a bungalow." Fish vanished into the waters.

On reaching home, fisherman saw a decent bungalow in place of his hut. His



wife was standing at the window. As soon as she saw the fisherman, she shouted at him, "You fool, you asked for a bungalow like that of king's but forgot to ask for royal costumes and jewellery? Go and get it now."

Fisherman returned to river bank. Called the fish and said to her, "My wife wants royal costumes and jewellery." Fish vanished again.

Fisherman reached his home and found his wife royally dressed. Next morning she said to him, "Ask your queen fish to send us servants and enough money." Fisherman obeyed, went to the



river bank, called the fish and told her about his wife's fresh demand.

On reaching home, he saw scores of servants busy in different chores. His wife was sitting on a pedestal, issuing orders. As soon as she saw her husband, she called a servant and ordered him to take the fisherman to cowshed and keep him tied there.



Servant obeyed.

Next morning, fisherman's wife called a servant and asked him to produce the fisherman before her. When he came, she ordered him to ask the fish queen to make her the boss of all fish. Fisherman did not agree. She called her servants and got him beaten up. He left for the river bank, half dead.



On reaching the bank, he called the golden fish. She appeared. He said, "My wife has become terribly greedy. She now wants you and all your fish to be under her command." Fish vanished.

There were clouds again. There was lightning and there were thunders. It started raining. Fisherman walked



fast to reach his home. When he reached there, he was taken aback. There was no



bungalow and no royal decor. His old hut was there and his wife was sweeping the floor.

"Oh my God! It means this poor fisherman also suffered because of that wicked lady. I pity him", said Kalhan.

"It always happens. If there is a bad person in your company, everybody will suffer. In friendship too, you must be careful to choose your friends", said Grandma.

It was late and younger ones were sleepy. Their parents took them to their rooms.



From the Pages of Ancient History - M.K.Parimoo Haarvan and its Archaeological Monuments

Shadaar Hadavan is the ancient name of Present day Haarvan. In Sanskrit, Shadaar Hadavan means either the forest of six sages or Huge deposits of snow. Haarvan is towards North-east of Srinagar (Kashmir), 4.28 kms. from Shalimar. Some Sanskrit historians have named it Nandini Kshetra, where as historian Abu Fazal calls it 'Phaag'.

According to Kalhana Pandit, "There was a Bodhisattav named Nagarjuna living in this country at Shadaar Hadavan". Nagarjuna was a Buddhist monk - philosopher and a proponent of Mahayana school of thought. Mahayana in Sanskrit means 'Greater Vehicle'. Mahayana school of thought emphasized the idea of Boddhi Sattav i.e. one who

seeks to become a Buddha. In several of his works, Nagarjuna defended the Mahayana Sutras as 'The Authentic Word of Buddha.' He also articulated the doctrine of emptiness (Shuniyata in Hindi).



At present, Haarvan is famous because of its water reservoir, but historically it has tremendous importance because of those archaeological monuments which have been found at an elevated site on the Zabarvan foot hills on the right side of the road, some distance away above 'Shah Kol' on its left bank. According to Prof. (Dr.) M.A. Stein, "No signs of any archaeological remains could be found any where in the area". Towards the last quarter of 19th century, some signs of the archaeological remains of Kushaan Period were thought upon, and in the first quarter of 20th century, some labourers were engaged for excavating archaeological remains. After some time, some tiles were retrieved, which verified the idea of archaeological remains in the



area. All the archaeological excavations were got carried out under the supervision of the then Superintendent of Archaeological Department of J & K Govt, Pt. R.C.Kak between 1919 and 1929 A.D.

Shri Kak has written about the Haarvan's archaeological remains in his book. According to Dr. Henrich, Nagarjuna was living during Kanishka's time and Kalhana Pandit also makes the mention of Nagarjuna during Kushaan Rule. Thus it is clear that Nagarjuna must have given his philosophy during Kushaan period.

Keeping Nagarjuna's stay at Haarvan in view, we can say that some archaeological remains must have been known during Nagarjuna's time, because these archaeological remains belong to 250 B.C. Moreover, the construction work started by Kushaans continued even after the Kushaan rule in Kashmir. While excavating some archaeological remains at Haarvan Kashmir, some coins were also found at the site.

The existence of archeological remains of Kushaan period at Haarvan reveal that during Kanishka's regime, Kushaan (also called UCHI) government was extended from Central Asia to the Bay of Bengal, with the result that the East got connected to the West by trade route, resulting in the exchange of trade as well as culture, thus giving a philip to the trade. It is testified by the moulds of different size excavated at Haarvan. The moulds were used to shape the clay bricks which were also baked so as to export them from India. In addition to these

bricks, tiles were also excavated from Haarvan. Images of human beings resembling with the inhabitants of Kashgar and Yaaraqand were found on those tiles. Some human figures were shown with Turkish caps on their heads & also wearing trousers, as described by an architect Percy Brown in his book 'Indian Architecture'. He also writes, "No doubt, the baked brick tiles shaped through moulds & excavated at Haarvan Kashmir are no doubt beautiful and matchless, but skill of craftsmen has not shown any further improvement. However, the idols and other images engraved on the brick tiles depict the culture of certain ancient civilizations. In addition to these we also find certain other things produced locally including various articles of diverse designs prevalent in ancient Greece and Persia. Some of the excavated brick tiles had the images of Indian elephants, lion and also some images of male as well as female dancers of different races as revealed through their costumes. Numerals are also engraved on these brick tiles. Recently the numerals have been deciphered are Kharoshti numerals. The Kharoshti numerals were in vogue 300 years B.C. in North Western India and during Kushaan period, counting was done with the help of these Kharoshti numerals only."

Kharoshti script was an ancient Indian script used in Gandhara. Gandhara (Mahajanpada) is the name of an ancient kingdom of India located (now) in Northern Pakistan and also parts of Eastern Afghanistan.



رسول میر



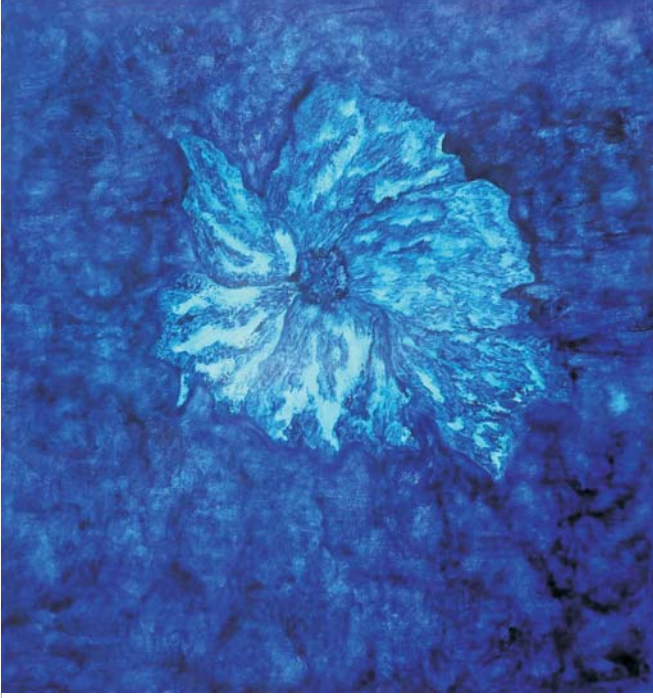
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کبوتر عاشق گئے آہ کاتی
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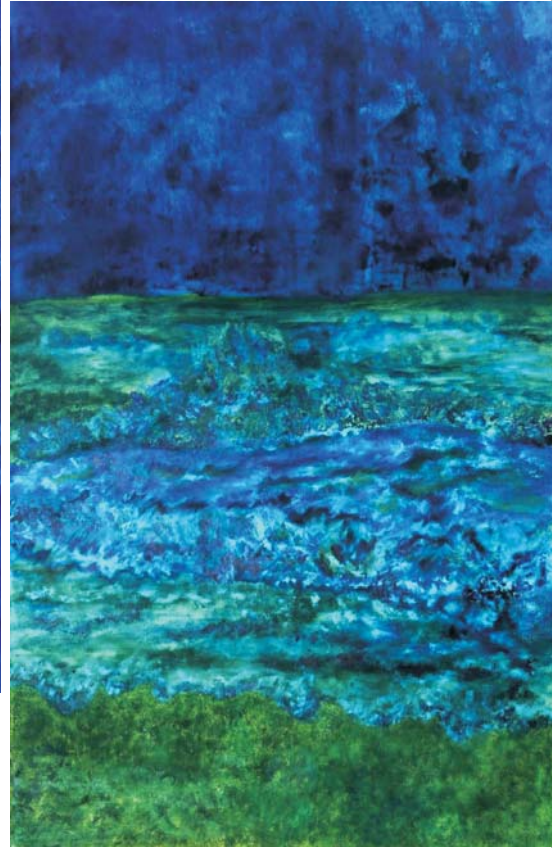
प्रागाश प्रोजेक्ट ज्ञान' की नेट-पत्रिका वर्ष ५ : अंक ९ | सितंबर २०२०

Your Own Page



The Nature

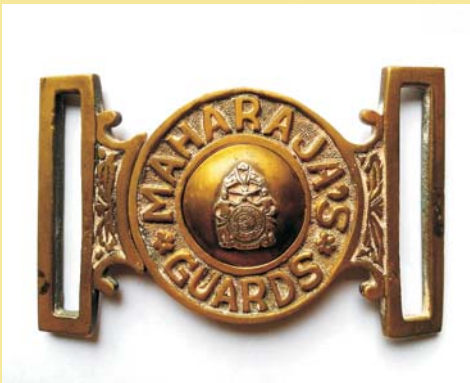
Paintings by Mona Jain, Indore



Maharaja's Guards

The official Belt-buckle of the Security at Maharaja Hari Singh's Palace.

Courtesy : Riyaansh Raina



Your Own Page

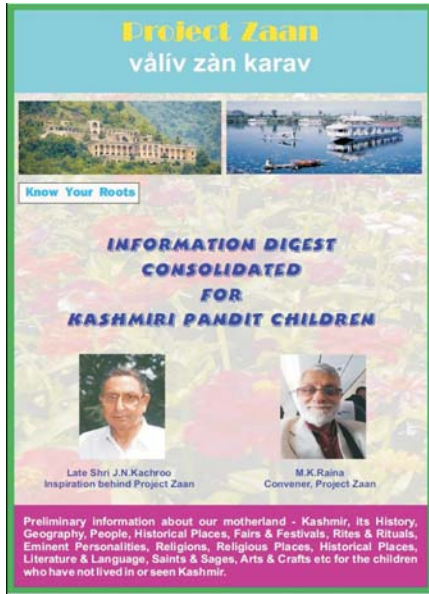
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Pandit Vishi Nath Kampasi (1853-1938). First Kashmiri photographer. Started his studio in Srinagar in 1880s. Sold his wife's Dejhaur to buy his first camera from a foreign tourist.

Courtesy : Autar Krishen Trisal

Letters to Editor



Mails/Messages regarding Project Zaan's 'Information Digest Consolidated' for Children.

Dear Editor,

This is with reference to the 'Information Digest Consolidated' recently released under Project Zaan. A commendable effort by a tireless man trying very hard to promote Kashmiri language and traditions. My salute to your efforts.

Sanjay Dhar
President KPA, Mumbai



Dear Sir,

Extol this piece of information (Information Digest Consolidated) and I understand lot of hard work would have gone in compilation of this document. Well received this sea of information for our Gen-next. I would urge to throw some more light on Kashmiri Pandit saints.

Lalit Zutshi
Kharghar, Navi Mumbai



Dear Sir,

This is absolutely incredible, dedicated and passionate work. This is a treasure without having an iota of doubt. Kudos and hats off to you Mahra.

Sunil Kaul
Kharghar, Mumbai



Dear Raina Sahib,

Thanks a ton for sharing this. This without any doubt is going down in evident history in flourishing our upcoming generation as well as others and elders to guide. Your



Letters to Editor

contributions are remarkable and I have no words to aver. Humble regards.

Lt Commander Vivek Tingloo
Delhi



Dear Raina Sahib,

Project Zaan Information Digest is a wonderfully prepared compendium of profound information. A lot of efforts and labour have been invested in its making. It will be immensely helpful and useful to younger generation. Congratulations and thanks for sharing and making it available to all.



Upender Ambardar
Jammu



Dear Sir,

Really a great work done in publishing Project Zaan Information Digest. I just glanced through, though I will read it in detail. It is a beautiful refresher for all adults and a priceless information source for KP kids to know their roots. Thankyou Raina Sahib. Naman to your dedication.

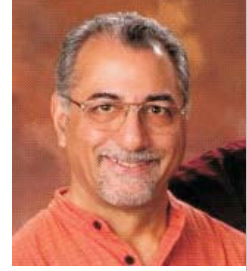


Ashok Raina
Bohri, Jammu



Dear Raina Sahib,

I have gone through the Digest. I compliment you for bringing out an informative issue in Digest series. It has come out well. God bless. In case you plan to bring out more editions of the same, please consider the following suggestions:



Page 2 : I recently chanced upon a link, which if referenced here will give a good addition. <https://youtu.be/vEX5h83AVL0>

Page 16 : If possible the Map which doesn't confuse people between Sindh and Indus may be posted.

Page 39 : Give Akhrot kul more width to project akhrot suitably. The tree on the left can be reduced in width.

Page 68: The abrupt jump from 1470 to Dogras is a little jarring. We can at least mention the various periods and then describe formation of J&K.

1320-1588 Sultans ; 1588-1753 Mughals; 1753-1819 Afgans; 1819-1846 Sikhs; 1846-1947 Dogras

Page 85: Sufis & Reshis could be elaborated: This has always been misunderstood. Sufis in Kashmir were Mystics also on proselytisation. Reshi's were Mystics totally engaged in God communion.

Page 126: We must give space to mention

Letters to Editor

all scripts while noting that as of now only Nastaliq is officially recognised. Sharada, Devanagri, Roman, Urdu, Sanskrit are scripts where our cultural fund is lodged. Page 142: Suggest mention names of famous women of Kashmir.

Regards,
Ashok Dullu
Baroda



Dear Sir,

No mention of Guru Tegh Bahadur in this entire project of Zaan, why? I have shared my concern with many Kashmiri Pandits. They find your mistake as unfortunate but vested. How can you ignore the sacrifices of Sikh Gurus for saving Pandits? Please come clean on this.



Desh Chander Kaul



Dear Shri Raina Sahib,

Thank you for creating such nice reading material for Kashmiri Pandit children who were not born in Kashmir or who did not stay for long in Kashmir and don't know much about the land of their ancestors. Digest will definitely prove a mini-encyclopedia for them and their



parents too. I have uploaded the Digest on our website for wider circulation.

Zitni Dhar, Singapore
<https://kashmirasitis.com>



Excellent information for not only children but for those also who are interested in our history and culture. We can not forget our motherland. You have done a great service to the whole community. Thank you so much.



Surendra Dhar
New Delhi



The posterity and the present generation will remain indebted to you Raina Sahib.

Pawanlata Kaul



Dear Raina Sahib,
Information Digest Consolidated is an excellent work, no words to express gratitude for the work you are doing. We are proud of you.



Neena Kher, Mumbai



Wonderful work. Great efforts.

Romesh Nadir, USA



Letters to Editor

Excellent work. Should be in every J&K home, including Ladakh.

Surender Tikoo
Pune



Dear Raina Sahib,

Thanks no, appreciation no, unexpected no, hard work no, dedication no, persistent love's labour no, then what? A combination of all these and even more. That is what I felt after going through the Project Zaan information digest written, compiled, edited and released by you.



Project Zan has been the best thing that ever happened to KP community around the world and specially to those in Mumbai and its neighbouring townships. You have proved to be the thread that held and continues to hold the rosary of all that is Kashmiri, it's history, language, music, food, religion, rituals, people etc. together

The 150 page document may look big at the first site. But going through it and appreciating the width of the canvas that you have covered with all the pictures and details on it, the number gets justified. I was looking for an index at the start, which i missed. Search would have been easier.

My late father, Shree J.N.Kachroo, would be smiling from wherever he be today. Not because you have acknowledged his contributions to the

Project but because for him it is competition of a task started long back. A student finishing what a teacher had started jointly with him and other emancipated peers.

Thank you Raina Sahib for this informative reference Digest, which should find a place in every KP home. Keep doing the good work.

Suriender Kachroo
Mumbai



Excellent. You have done a great service to educate the community about our land, culture and history. Thank you so much Sir.

Nancy Bhat Munshi



Superb work Raina Sahab. Information Digest Consolidated is really a Gaagar mein Saagar. Qadman madad tû sehte badan tohi.

Bharat Pandit
Mumbai



Great work Raina Sahib. Such a treasure trove for our young and generation next.

Anil Tickoo

