



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

Praagaash

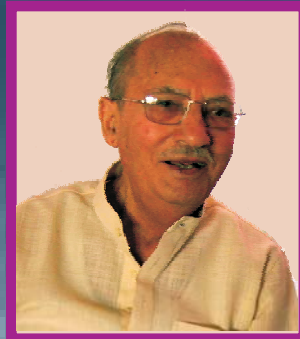
Net-journal of 'Project Zaan'

प्रागाश

प्रोजेक्ट ज्ञान' की नेट-पत्रिका

वर्ष ३ : अंक १ ~ जुलाई २०१८

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Special Feature
Late Shri M.L. Mattoo

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Special Feature :
Remembering the
Philanthropist
Late Shri M.L.Mattoo

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Editorial

- M.K.Raina

Revival of Zaan and här-van (now Praagaash)

Project Zaan was started in the year 1999 to inculcate interest in our younger generation in their mother-tongue and to disseminate information on various facets of our motherland so as to reach this generation who were not born in Kashmir or did not live there for a long. The Project conducted classes in Kashmiri language, held quiz contests from time to time and published Information Digest Series till 2003 when due to various reasons, its reach-the-people activity came to a standstill. The Project has been restarted now. Kashmiri Pandits' Association, Mumbai has thankfully decided to take its ownership and support it both materially and financially.



In the meantime, här-van, the net magazine of the Project was published every month from August 2007 to December 2008 beyond which it could not be worked upon due to pre-occupation of its editorial staff. Revival of Project Zaan has also contributed to restarting the magazine with a new name 'Praagaash' and its first issue is now before you.

In the past we have published two special issues of här-van in May 2008 and August 2008. First one carried the life and works of our Consulting Editor Shri T.N.Dhar Kundan Sahib and the second one was dedicated to the memory of Late Shri Onkar Aima Sahib. Continuing with our legacy of highlighting the contribution of our own artistes, litterateurs, authors, intellectuals, public figures and various other icons of the society, we are dedicating this issue of Praagaash to the memory of Late Shri M.L.Mattoo, ex President of KPA, a philanthropist and a simple and loving person at heart. His contribution to the Mumbai biradari has been immense and this issue of Praagaash is a small but sincere tribute to the great person who Mumbai biradari will remember for a long long time.



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Project Zaan is the Literary Initiative of Kashmiri Pandits' Association, Mumbai.

Message from Convener, Project Zaan

As you are aware, the Project Zaan is involved in dissemination of information related to our motherland Kashmir, its people, its history, its culture, heritage and language to our younger generations since 1999. Over the years, it has published 3 volumes in the Information Digest Series and a Basic Reader in Kashmiri Language apart from Kashmiri Workshop material like 'How to read and write Kashmiri' and 'Work-book' for children. This Basic Reader was the first of its kind to be published in India, carrying lessons to enable read and write Kashmiri in Devanagari, incorporating therein, the Standardised Devanagari-Kashmiri script. Unfortunately, the 'Reader' went broadly unheard and unsung because of the apathy of masses to encourage steps which nurture Kashmiri language and its scripts. At Project Zaan we also conducted classes for teaching Kashmiri from time to time and held a series of Zaan Festivals, where, as a result of continuous persuasion and personal rapport, not only children, but elders also took part in great numbers. Awards and trophies were given away year after year. With the wholehearted and selfless support of Shri Sunil Fotedar in Texas, USA, a website www.zaan.net was launched which carried all the material published by Project Zaan.

As a matter of fact, all publishing works need continuous finance to survive. It is also a fact that there are not many subscribers to the already publishing KP journals throughout the country. Except for Koshur Samachar, which perhaps raises substantial amount of finance thru matrimonial columns, no other journal seems to be self-financing. The result is that either the publication of journal is altogether stopped (e.g. The Sharada Tarangini of Faridabad, aalav of Bangaluru, Vitasta of

Kolkata), or it is financed thru donations, or transfer of funds from other heads, or by way of advertisements. Apart from this, there also are limitations with regard to number of pages a printed journal can have. More the number of pages, more the expenditure and less chances of survival. Here, I am specific about KP journals and this maxim may or may not hold good for other journals.



At Project Zaan, we have for a long time, been thinking of the ways and means with which we can continue to be in touch with the community. Our concern to nurture Kashmiri language and provide our biradari with the reading material in this language in the standardised script, is well known. We have also noticed over the years that books of Kashmiri material like stories, poems, articles and essays, do not invite many customers. As a result, most of the authors in this language spend out of their pockets on publications (without any hope of returns), or keep their writings safely sealed in their cupboards.

Taking a cue from the e-magazines net-loaded worldwide, we at Project Zaan decided to initiate a journal to cater to our readers thru net. Since no expenses are involved at the readers' level, the magazine would be easily accessed, saved in computers and read at will. Though some expenses are definitely involved at the data entry and layout levels, these are not worth worrying. Reaching the readers with a copy of the journal through e-mails and websites will be instant and without any postal expenses. An added quality of an e-journal is that photos of events from anywhere in the world can be included instantly, without fuss and practically with little expenses.

Another positive point about the e-journals is that its publishing frequency can be increased with the passage of time. Yes, it will cause an additional stress on the editors and organisers but we are sure, with the passage of time, more people will chip in, help us in the venture and make our job easy.

Having come a long way from the inceptive stage to the launching stage in August 2007 and relaunched now after a gap of about nine and a half years, the journal renamed as 'Praagaash' is before you. The journal is trilingual - English, Hindi, Kashmiri, meant to cater to all sections of writers. We intend to include all types of writings i.e. prose, poetry, essays, stories, photo-features etc, (preferably Kashmir and Kashmiri-specific) in addition to the main features 'Project Zaan' stands for, but no political write-ups and statements. We will always be eager to incorporate writings from all those who are inclined to write for the journal and who want our language, culture and heritage to flourish.

I am thankful to Shri T.N.Dhar Kundan Sahib who has volunteered to be part of the 'Praagaash' again, not only as its Consulting Editor but also as a great support to our plans. Keeping his long literary experience and his contribution to the Kashmiri language in view, his efforts in shaping the 'Praagaash' as a prospective leading KP journal will always be noteworthy. Another credit which goes to Shri Kundan Sahib is his immense contribution to almost all KP journals in India in all the three languages i.e. Kashmiri, Hindi and English.

On this day, at the re-launch of 'Praagaash', I pay my sincere tributes to Late Shri J.N.Kachroo, Late Shri Onkar Aima, Late Shri J.L.Manwati and Late Shri M.L.Mattoo who toiled very hard to shape the Zaan platform to let our youngsters get acquainted with our language, culture and heritage. The four stalwarts may not be with us now, but I

am sure, they will be watching our activities from the heavens and smiling meaningfully on seeing their vision carried forward through Project Zaan and its mouthpiece 'Praagaash'.

It may not be out of place to mention that we recently had our first Zaan Festival (after revival of Project Zaan) at Kashyap Bhawan, Andheri, Mumbai where we paid sincere tributes to all the above stalwarts as also to Late M.L.Kemmu and Late Arjundev Majboor, the doyens of Kashmiri literature. People's participation here was encouraging. We intend to organise next ZaanFest at Sharada Sadan, Kharghar, Navi Mumbai on 25 August 2018 and request biradari members to attend in numbers.

Give Zaan a Hand, a Big Hand.

- M.K.Raina

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यिनु साँ असख !

जनानु अख गॅयि येरु दुकानस प्यठ तु वोनुन येरु वॉलिस, 'रात खसु बॅनियान मे च्चे निशि मॅल्य हेच, च्चे वोनुथ स्व छि अस्ल येरुच । मगर गरि वुछ असि तथ बॅनियानि ओस अँदुर्य किन्य लीखिथ जि येर छुनु असली येर ।'

दुकानदार ओस चालाख । दोपुनस, 'हा क्याह रोवुय । सु छु तथ आसान केम्यन कूलन खॉतरु लीखिथ, युथ नु तिम अस्ल येर जॉनिथ बॅनियान ख्यन ।'



Message from Consulting Editor ‘Praagaash’
T.N.Dhar ‘Kundan’

सान्यव टाठ्यव परन वाल्यव,

तोहि आसि याद, केह काल ब्रोंह ऑस्य अँस्य अख मैगज़ीन कडान। नाव ओसुस ‘हॉरवन’। अज़ छि अँस्य यि नवि सरु कडान मगर नाव थोवुस ‘प्रागाश’। व्वमेद छि तोह्य वँरिव यि तिथय पॉठ्य पसंद यिथु पॉठ्य तथ ऑसिवु करान तु सुय लोल बँरिव यथ ति।

यि छु कौशुर मैगज़ीन कौशिर्यन बापथ तु कशीरि मुतलक। अँस्य छि वाहरावनु आमृत्य। अलग अलग जायन छि रोज़ान पनुनि वतनु दूर। यथ छलुछांगरि मंज़ रॉव असि पनुन्य ज्यव, पनुन्य वसमथ तु पनुन तोर तरीकु। अमि किन्य छु ज़रूरी अख सूचिथ समजिथ मुहिम चलावँन्य येमि सूत्य सॉन्य ज्यव ति रोज़ि ज़िन्दु तु वसमथ ति। असि छि पानु ति अथ रॉछ्य करुन्य तु पनुन्यन शुर्यन ति अथ ब्रोंह पक़नावनुक होसलु द्युन। यि मैगज़ीन छु अमी मुहिमि हुन्द अख अंग। यथ मंज़ करव अँस्य अंग्रीज्य, हिन्दी तु कौशिरिस मंज़ लेख, कहॉनी,

बाँथ, तु बेयि बेयि मसालु पेश।

अमापोज़ नज़र रोज़ि पनुनिस कौशिरुतिस प्यठ। कूशिश छि करुन्य ज़ि यथ मंज़ करव अँस्य ति केह पेश युस सोन मोठमुत पथकाल ज़िन्दु करि, सोन बजर नेछिनावि, तु सोन बटु तीज़ रँछरावि। अथ कामि मंज़ छु असि लेखन वाल्यन हुन्द मदद ति ज़रूरत तु परन वाल्यन हुन्द लोल ति हाजथ।

लेखन वॉल्य सोज़न पनुन्य लीख्यमुत्य बाँथ, कहॉनियि, तु परन वॉल्य दिन दाय तदबीर ज़ि बेयि क्याह गछि यथ मंज़ आसुन युस तिमन ख्वश करि तु तिहँज ज़ान बँडरावि। अँस्य मंगव दयस ऑही युथ सोन कौम बजा गछि तु सॉरी फवलन तु नवन।

हरि ओम् तत् सत्।



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Editor's Note

Views expressed in the signed articles are not necessarily those of **Project Zaan** or **Praagaash**. We invite young writers to write for Praagaash. Write ups can be in Kashmiri, Hindi or English, concerning Kashmir, Kashmiri language and KPs. Write ups on Science, Medical Science, Health, achievements by our Children, Young & Old are also welcome.

Articles can be e-mailed to projectzaan@gmail.com

While e-mailing articles in Hindi/Kashmiri, kindly attach the font used.

काव्य - मास्टर ज़िंदु कौल
सुमरन



सुमरन पनुन्य दिन्नॉनम, लोलुक निशानु वैसिये ।
रँछरुन तोगुम नु रोवुम, ओसुम नु बानु वैसिये ।।
पथ कालि छुम नु द्युतुमुत, स्वन म्वख्तु दान वैसिये ।
अँन्य सारि क्याह लबख व्वन्य, तिम म्वख्तु दानु वैसिये ।।
वॉलिंजि मंज़ थवुन गोछ, हावुन थोवुम अथस प्यठ ।
राह कस छु कोर मे पानस, न्वखसान पानु वैसिये ।।
हावुन छू रावुरावुन, छावुक समर छु खॉमी ।
थावान छि छावु बापथ, बानन ति ठानु वैसिये ।।
यनु सुय निशानु रोवुम, तनु मँन्न गँमुच तु फलुवा ।
न्युन ह्योन नु कँह ति, फेरान छस वानु वानु वैसिये ।।
यछ पछ मु हार, ब्याखा ह्यथ यूय वाति कांछा ।
तस छा वँमी निशानन, बँय बँय खजानु वैसिये ।।
डोलान कोहन वनन मंज़, शोलान छि गुलशनन मंज़ ।
ज्रोतान छि तारुकन मंज़, काँत्याह निशानु वैसिये ।।
व्यसुरिथ डँलिथ पथर प्यथ बुथ क्याह दिमय तँमिस निश ।
पथ फेरनुक्य पकान छा, यिथ्य हिव्य बहानु वैसिये ।।
मानव जि अँस्य ह्यमव पथ, छोर्या तसुंद मोहबथ ।
पैवंद यि आदनुक छा शुर्य दोस्तानु वैसिये ।।
दिल फुट्यमुत्यन सु तोशन, यँन्न गँर्यमुत्यन छु रोशन ।
गछ वँर्यमुत्यन स्वदामन, पृछ गॉयिबानु वैसिये ।।
अँद्य पँख्य तँती छु आसन, ब्वदु ब्रोर सूरदासुन ।
बोज्ञान छु माय लॉगिथ लोलुक्य तरानु वैसिये ।।

Project Zaan

(A KPA Mumbai Initiative)

**Announces
ZaanFest - 2**

at

**Sharda Sadan,
Kharghar, Navi Mumbai
on
25 August 2018.**

COME ONE, COME ALL

Participate in Open Quiz

**And help
Legendry Zaan Ded
to
save her
VASMATH
for Posterity.**

**Isn't it our Vasmath
anyway?**

Remember

**25 August 2018
3.00 PM onwards**

Kashmir Imbroglio - Prof. Raj Nath Bhat

My Views On and About Our Ancestral Home

My views on and about our ancestral home, that is Kashmir valley, might seem unpalatable to many a mind/reader, yet I consider it my duty to share these with the young minds. Some of them, I trust, will realize the significance of my opinion in not so distant future. My views are as follows:

1. Having spent my formative years at school, college, in the ancestral home-town, I consider it my duty to enlighten the generations that have either heard about their parents' home or have visited there as tourists, that there was a constant scaring-pressure on our mind about our identity, job as well as security. Despite hardships, the post 1990 generations had a secure and dignified education and environment to live in. Having visited the valley on more than five occasions during the last decade, I realize that the generation now in our ancestral home is unwilling to accommodate 'alien' beings called battaa-s! They have heard about us! They are free of any guilt, because they were in their infancy then. They do not wish 'alien' beings to disturb their plans.

Therefore, educate yourselves, obtain the best skills and move on to become international torch-bearers. Do not allow others sentimentality dampen your spirits. Be an inspiration to the man-kind across the globe with honesty, dedication and knowledge.

2. There has been a selfish narrative monitoring our thinking all these years. Let that narrative be replaced with a fresh, pragmatic and just opinion. The three regions of the Jammu & Kashmir state do not share anything among them. The three regions Ladakh, Kashmir and Jammu are climatically, ethnically, culturally, linguistically distinct from one another. The state deserves to be

trifurcated into Kashmir state, Jammu state, and Union Territory of Ladakh. With such trifurcation the people of each entity will prosper and progress in all areas of education, health services, infra-structure as well as social security. Why do I suggest it?

Kings in the past believed in self enhancement, cruelty and plunder of the common masses. Dogra Kings were no exception. In the middle of the nineteenth century, after the demise of Emperor Ranjit Singh [Lahore was his Capital], the English annexed Punjab deceitfully. The Dogra King of Jammu extended support to the English in this deceitful annexation of Punjab to the East India Company. Dogra King was fruitfully rewarded for the job! At that time, the Dogra Kings ruled Jammu province, Ladakh, Gilgit and Baltistan (these regions lie adjacent to Ladakh). Kashmir province had fallen under the Punjab King after the fall of the tyrant rulers from 'Central Asia'. Mughals had fallen before the Central Asian take over. One must not look at the King's tyranny from the 'religious' angle only. The British after taking control of Punjab, 'gifted' Kashmir province to the Dogra King for seventy-five lakh rupees which was to be paid to the British in installments!

Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah was a post-graduate in Sciences from the Aligarh Muslim University. He was denied a lectureship in any College at Srinagar! Deeply hurt and anguished, S.M. Abdullah founded 'Muslim Conference' which in 1930 C.E agitated against the atrocities committed by the King's administration. The agitation turned violent



and resulted in loot, arson, and death of some agitators. In 1940 SM Abdullah under the banner of National Conference's 'Quit Kashmir' movement sought expulsion of the Dogra King to build a 'New Kashmir'. The movement was aimed at administratively separating Kashmir province from the other provinces. Because of the indecisiveness of the Dogra King before August 1947, the tribal raiders from the newly created Pakistan succeeded in taking control of Pahari-speaking region of Muzafarabad etc. This region is now called PoK in India and Azad Kashmir in Pakistan. It is predominantly a Pahari-speaking area. Please also note that the British administration had taken direct control of Gilgit-Baltistan in the thirties of the last century. Not a word was heard in protest from any part of the Dogra Empire!

The tribal raid forced the Dogra King to sign the treaty of accession with India. SM Abdullah assumed the role of the 'New King'. He forgot to build his 'New Kashmir', instead like older Monarchs; he desired to rule larger territories! But in consultation with the central leaders, he succeeded in giving elites in Kashmir an upper hand in all areas of governance and loot across the vast territories. As a result central funds have been constantly spent to enrich the elite in Kashmir Province forcing the other provinces to suffer on all fronts of education, health-services, infra-structure development, and employment. In order to do justice to the commoners in all regions, it is necessary to trifurcate the state into Kashmir state, Jammu state and UT Ladakh. Such a move will ensure peace, development, prosperity and transparency.

Those who subscribe to the creation of a Union Territory (UT) for the displaced people of Kashmir valley must realize that such 'creation' will be possible only after 'trifurcation' as described above.

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ललु वाख

अंदर ऑसिथ न्यबर छोंडुम
पवनन रगन वॅरनम सथ ।
द्यानु किन्व् दय ज़गि कीवल ज़ोनुम
रंग गव संगस मीलित्थ क्यथ ॥



अँदरी आयस चंद्रय गारान
गारान आयस हिद्यन हिह ।
च्यु हय नारान च्यु हय नारान
च्यु हय नारान यिम कम विह ॥



अकुय ओंकार युस नाभि दरे
कुम्भुय ब्रह्माण्डस सुम गरे ।
अख सुय मंथुर च्यतस करे
तस सास मंथुर क्याह करे ॥



अछ्यन आय तु गछुन गछे
पकुन गछे द्यन क्यो राथ ।
योरय आयि तु तूर्य गछुन गछे
केंह नतु केंह नतु केंह नतु क्याह ॥



काव्य - लाल लक्षमन

शखदारी

कश्मीरी साहित्य में हास्य और उपहासपूर्ण लेखों की कमी नहीं है। मकबूल शाह कालवारी, महमूद गामी, हसन गनाई, हबीबुल्लाह हकीम आदि ऐसे कितने नाम हैं, जिन्होंने हास्य और उपहास को काव्य का रूप दिया है। हास्य-उपहास के संदर्भ में लाल लक्षमन का नाम सब से पहले आता है। श्री बलजी नाथ पंडित ने लाल लक्षमन की रचनाएँ और उन का माहात्म्य जान कर ही उन को क्षेमेंदर सानी का नाम दिया था।

लाल लक्षमन का असली नाम लक्षमन राजदान था। उन का जन्म १४ अप्रैल १८९२ को कुलगाम तहसील के एक गांव हांद चोलगोम में हुआ और ७० साल की आयु में ५ दिसंबर १९६२ को उन का स्वर्गवास हुआ।

लाल लक्षमन ज़्यादा पढ़े लिखे नहीं थे लेकिन आम फारसी पर उन की अच्छी महारत थी। वह अपनी रचनायें लिख कर नहीं रखते थे। शब्दों पर उन की पकड़ इतनी गहरी थी कि बस किसी ने आग्रह किया और वह शुरू हो गये। उन की ज़्यादातर रचनायें पोलीस वालों, क्रूर अफसरों, दुकानदारों, अतिथि सत्कार न करने वालों आदि के विरुद्ध थीं। लाल लक्षमन गणेश भक्त थे। उन्होंने भजन और दूसरी धार्मिक कवितायें भी लिखी हैं।

बॉश दूह बरनि प्यठ बेयि बटुवारे, लाल लक्षमण शखदारे द्राव।
थाल तय बोहगुन तुलुन अटुबारे, लाल लक्षमण शखदारे द्राव।।

ग्रुहदिस तु गृहचारस गॅयि मिलवन, सतरंजि फरदाह गिलवन द्राव।
होछिमुन्न गुर्य खँट ऑसुस सवारे, लाल लक्षमण शखदारे द्राव।।

दूहु अकि लालु जू फोट अँकिस गमुनस, दाह मोहनिव्य तस लमुनस लॅग्य।
दरु दरु दीवान वर लोगुस कारे, लाल लक्षमण शखदारे द्राव।।

दूहु अकि काकस आफताब रामस, बागवथ वोनुमस शामस ताम।
द्यवु दियि बतु म्यौड यियि व्यचारे, लाल लक्षमण शखदारे द्राव।।

शामन वोनुनम वॉराग ओनुथम, बतु मैडि बापथ वोनुथम वीद।
अँस्य नसॉ ज्ञानोय यिमु ज्ञासकारे, लाल लक्षमण शखदारे द्राव।।

बुडाह अख ऑसुय आमुन्न तु गॉमुन्न, मरनु दादि ऑसुय दूदुरेमुन्न।
क्रोछ ह्यथ आयम चोकु मंजु लारै, लाल लक्षमण शखदारे द्राव।।



Religion & Spirituality - T.N.Dhar 'Kundan'

Spirituality in Kashmiri Literature

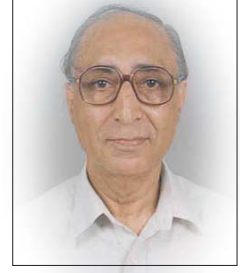
Kashmiri language has a rich literature. Prior to 1947, it had a predominantly versified stock of different hues but after independence our writers contributed in other prose forms as well, like short story, novel, drama and essay. One thing is very clear that there is an undercurrent of spirituality in this store house of literature. Right from the Vakhs of Shitikanth and the great Lal Ded and the Shrukhs of Nunda Rishi down to the compositions of the contemporary poets, there is an element of spirituality that highlights the basic thinking of Kashmiri people. At places the spiritual content is vivid and clear and at other places it is subtle and hidden. The Muslim Rishi-poets from Shams Faqir to Ahad Zargar, the Hindu devotional poets from Paramanand and Krishna Razdan to Master Ji have all contributed to this subject, each in his unique way.

In most of these writings there is an element of mystery because the spirituality by its nature is mysterious and unfathomable. Lal Ded in her straightforward way asks, 'Yas na kenh vanan tas kyah chhu naav – What is the name of that Nameless One?' Now compare this with what Masterji has said. He writes, 'Kartam kaemtamath bona pot tshayi doore dyuthmut, sanyav kanav ti buzmut, sanis manas ti byuthmut, taemsund chhi aes dooryer zarith sui monmut chhuk ruthmut – sometime in the hoary past someone has seen some shadow of somebody from a distance; we have so heard and our mind has believed in it. We have been suffering because of his separation and have presumed that he is annoyed with us'. The mystery of the existence of the Divine has been vividly felt and expressed by all these poets and this is what intrigues us even today.

That is why Rehman Rahi had to say, '*Mato ravarta irfanuk asar ho* – Do not let the effect of mysticism wane away.

Kashmir has been center of the monistic school of philosophy. It is, therefore natural that our poets and writers have been deeply affected by this view. Right from Lal Ded down to Ahad Zargar everyone has subscribed to this point of view. All of them have laid emphasis on the real and fruitful practices and denounced ostentatious rituals. Lal Ded says, '*phiran phiran nyoth onguj gaji manach dayi tsaji no* – Telling the beads you have only rubbed your thumb and finger but have not been able to remove the duality from your mind'. Shams Faqir has put forth the same view in these words: '*Ha zahida kyah chhuk tsa karan, raath doh goi tasbih phiran. Mokhta ravi fatus rachhit zom, roni mutsrith shroni shroni ko't gom* – what are you up to you fool, you have been telling the rosary day and night. Going after fake things you are losing sight of the real pearl. Have I lost the jingle by untying the bells?'

This spirituality is prominent in the writings of Ahmad Batawari, Shah Gafoor, Nyama Saeb, Swachha Kral, Asad Paray and others. All these poets have advocated self-realisation and oneness of individual soul and the universal soul. One verse reads, '*Ognuy sapanto dognyar travo pana nish paan parzanavo lo* – Be one with the Divine, give up the notion of duality and try to realize yourself.' Another verse reads, '*Ognuyar soruy dognyar naba habba yi chhuy bahanai* – Everything here is verily one; there is no duality but an illusion'. Ahad Zargar, a more recent poet in



this lineage has put it lucidly in these verses: *'dai sae bronh sapud oasis bui, ha ahad zargara door kar dui, pura ada deshyekh panun deedar* – only I existed before the Divine, O Ahad Zargar shun duality and then alone you will realize yourself.

The Vedas say, *'Ekam sat viprah bahudhah vadanti* – Truth is one and the wise describe it in different ways'. Pushpadanta has said, *'Nrinam eko gamyah* – people treading different paths have one and the same destination to reach.' Asad Parray has beautifully stated this fact in this verse, *'Kath chha kuni vath chha byon byon* – The truth is one but the paths leading to it are different'. If we read even the contemporary literature we will find that there is an undercurrent of spirituality in the writings of everyone, because the spirit is an important aspect of human existence. This literature is our treasure and we must safeguard and preserve it. Our young scholars will be well advised to conduct research in various aspects of our literature and write dissertations on these for the benefit of the lovers of the Kashmiri language.

There is no doubt that we have a rich tradition of spirituality in our literature. The Sanskrit equivalent of the word tradition is 'Parampara' which means from one to another or from generation to generation. Thus tradition is what we have inherited from our ancestors. I could readily think of two major items that we can justifiably be proud of. These two items are *Rishi Parampara (Ryeshyut in Kashmiri)* or the tradition of sainthood and *'Kashmir Shaiva Darshan'* or the Trika Philosophy of Kashmir. In fact the two are so intermingled that no line can be drawn to demarcate their area of influence.

Let us take the latter first. It was the sage Vasugupta who meditated on the great Shiva and begged of Him to reveal the profound secret. He guided him to a rock, which when touched by him overturned and there were

'Shiva-Sutras' written on it. These aphorisms became the foundation on which the philosophy of Kashmir was built up. It developed into three major branches, the *'Spanda'* or the divine throb, the *'Pratyabhijna'* or the cognition and the *'Tantra'* or the mystical exercises. This philosophy is basically a non-dualist ideology where the creator and the creation are considered as one. It is believed that there are thirty-six elements from the gross element of the earth to the subtlest element of the Parama Shiva. The seeker has to rise from the gross element to the subtle element and realize the Divine, which coincides with self-realization. The creation is believed to be the manifestation of the creator and thus both are real and that there is no illusion except when the vision is blurred by the sense-objects.

There is a galaxy of the great Shaiva scholars, who have written treatises, commentaries and original works about this great philosophy including Kallat, Somananda, Utpal Dev and the genius Abhinavaguptapada. The last named is the author of the monumental work on Shaiva philosophy called *Tantraloka*'. In this philosophy God has been conceived as a universal Consciousness, which pervades everything and yet transcends everything, *'Vishwa-atmikam tad-uttirnam hridayam parameshatuh. Paradi shakti rupena sphuranteem samvidum numah'*.

As regards the rishi cult it is to be noted that Kashmir has all along been called *'Rishi-vaer'* or the garden of sages. Although the hidden source of this tradition is the same Shaiva philosophy yet the visible source is Lal Ded, whose *'Vakhs'* (lit. power of giving expression to the knowledge) are on the tip of the tongue of every Kashmiri. She was followed by Nunda Rishi, whose *'Shrukhs'* (*Shloka* in Sanskrit) are again very popular. Thereafter we come across the writings of the Muslim Rishis from Shams Faqir to Ahad

Zargar, whose poetry in native language is seeped into this non-dualistic philosophy. We also have devotional songs written by Paramananda, Krishna Joo Razdan, Prakash Ram and others. These are also written in the backdrop of the non-dualist philosophy of Kashmiri thinkers. In Kashmir scholars like Dr. Balji Nath Pandita, Dr. Neel Kanth Gurtu, M.L.Kukiloo Dr. Dembi, Dr. Toshkhani and many others have done a lot of work on this philosophy. Outside Kashmir also there are some scholars who have worked on various important texts of this philosophy. Dr. Pandey in Lucknow, Dr. Chaturvedi in Jaipur and others have highlighted the distinguishing features of this rich tradition of ours. There is an Abhinavgupta Centre of Kashmir Shaiva Darshan at Lucknow. Dr. Chatterjee has written a history of Kashmir Shaiva Philosophy. There are, however, still many areas that require a concerted research so that the uniqueness of this thought is prominently brought out.

Alakh Ishwari Roop Bhawani is a class apart in this tradition. She is regarded by us as an incarnation of Sharika Bhagavati and is therefore, referred to as 'Sharika Ansha roopa'. Her life and sayings are monuments to the thought and philosophy of Kashmir. Her memories attached to places like Manigram, Vaskur, Chashma Sahebi and Safa Kadal in Srinagar are vivid examples of this philosophy applied to day to day life. Her father requested the Goddess to come to him and she was born as his daughter. She did *Tapasya* at various places and demonstrated her spiritual powers in her in laws, Sapus as well. When she and a Muslim saint Shah Qalander were on the opposite banks of a river, the saint asked her to cross over to him and he would turn her from silver (Roopa or ro'f) to gold. She in turn asked him to take an initiative to cross and she would turn him to pearl (Mo'khta), which also means to get

liberated. It is said that he did cross in a boat as the boatman to Shiva and Shakti and was sent back by her. Then she crossed the river in a boat sitting by the side of Shiva as His consort. Her writings are naturally, therefore, full of spirituality and serve as a beacon light to the seekers of Truth.

Thus it will be seen that spirituality is inherent in Kashmir as also in the literature produced by the writers and scholars of this place in various languages. The reader finds an undercurrent of spirituality even in the pieces of literature that may otherwise be categorized as romantic, ethical, nature-worshipping or an ode to motherland, nature and the like.

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Do You Know

Historians have mentioned some historical works which were produced in Kashmir before 'Baharistan-i-Shahi' was written but these are lost. Three histories are invariably mentioned in this connection: those of Mulla Naderi, Qazi Ibrahim and Mulla Hasan Qari. In their absence, 'Baharistn-i-Shahi' enjoys the status of being the first fully detailed history of Kashmir written anonymously in A.D. 1614. Of the two extant manuscript copies of Baharistan-i-Shahi, one is in the British Museum and the other is in the India Office. An abridged MS copy is in Bankipore Library.



Religion & Spirituality - Dr. Chaman Lal Raina

अलख साहिबा श्री रूपा भवानी

आविर्भूता जनक तपसा शारिका अंशरूपा
 ध्वान्तं भितवा सकल जगतो यागतासीत्समक्षम ।
 भक्ताञ्च प्रवरसुखदामागतानां समीपे
 वन्दे नित्यम विकसितमुखीं रूपनाम्नीभवानीम् ॥
*aavirbhootaa janaka tapasaa shaarika
 aMsharuupaa
 dhvaaantaM bhitvaa sakala jagato
 yaagataasiitsamaxam.
 bhaktaa~ncha
 pravarasukhadaamaagataanaaM samiipe
 vande nityaM vikasitamukhiim
 ruupanaamniim bhavaaniim.*

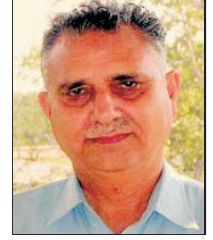
Translation of the Dhyaana Shloka runs as:
 "Always meditate upon the sacred name of
 Shri Roopa Bhavani, who incarnated through
 the tapasya--austerities and spiritual quest of
 Her father, as the Amsha-Roopa--a portion of
 Jagat Mata Shri Sharika. She descended with
 all bloomed face to shower the blessings of
 Prakash/spiritual enlightenment and to
 remove Avidya/ignorance and delusion, who
 take refuge in her as being the Bhaktas /
 devotees.

Kashmir is the cradle of spirituality,
 where a blend of Shaiva and Shakti was
 adopted to realize the Supreme Reality in the
 early religious thought of Kashmir. Shaivism
 became an intellectual discipline, but
 Shaktivad became more prominent, because
 of the vibrant view of Prakriti/ Mother nature
 around the valley of Kashmir. Shakti is adored
 as the Shri Raginya at Tullamula in the form of
 mystic spring, Shri Sharika at Hari Parbat on
 the rock of a hillock , Shri Jwala at Khrew on
 the rock of the hillock, Shri Bhadrakali at
 Handwara area in the form of Devadaroo/pine
 tree , Shri Bala at Balahama in the form of

Devadaroo tree, Shri Tripura
 at Qarfali Mohalla in the form
 of a well, Shri Mahakali at
 FatehKadal-ZainaKadal in
 the form of mystic spring on
 the banks of the Vitasta
 (Jehlum). Shri Tripura
 Sundari is in the form of the
 mystic spring at Divasar. Shri Sharada at
 Sharada Peetha in the form of mystic Yantra
 on a rock, now under POK. All these
 manifestations are but the representations of
 Divine Mother either in a rock or water or tree,
 but Shri Sharika incarnated her Divine
 effulgence in the form of a female baby born of
 the parentage of Shri Madhav Joo Dhar of the
 Khankahi-Sokta at Safa Kadal on the most
 sacred day of the Jyashthha Purnima in the
 4696th year of the Saptarshi era
 corresponding to 1677 Bikrami and 1621 A.D.
 It is said that she lived full one hundred years
 and left her mortal frame to fulfill the principle
 of the law of nature with respect to life and
 death on the Magha Krishna Saptami in the
 year 1777 A.D. This year we are celebrating
 Roopa Bhavani's 233rd Nirvana Diwas, on
 the 6th of January. This sacred Tithi is revered
 as the "Sahiban Hunz Satam". She is the
 Divine manifestation of the Bija Sapt Akshari
 Mantra / Mystic seven syllabled Mantra of the
 Divine Mother Sharika. The Mantra runs as:
*Aum Hrim Shrim Hum Fraam Aam Shaam -
 Shaarikaayai Namah.*

ॐ ह्रीं श्रीं हुं फ्रां आं शां श्री शारिकायै नमः ॥

Prefix Aum and suffix Namah are the
 prerequisites to invoke any Mantra. Aum is the
 Vedic Pranava and Namah is the prostrations
 before the Deity in both the Vedic and Tantric



way of worship .This is known as the Samputa Mantra of Shri Sharika. This Mantra has been invoked for attaining Siddhi/spiritual perfection from the ancient times,in Kashmir. This is the Maha -Mantra and the Siddha - Mantra along with the Gayatri Mantra. Pandit Madhav Joo Dhar was the Sapta Bija Mantra Siddha Purusha, which made Divine Mother Shri Sharika to descend in his home,through his Shradha/unquestioned faith and Bhakti/devotion to Shri Sharika. Pandit Madhav Joo Dhar was as blessed . He became the father of the female child to be adored as Roopa Bhavani/R'opa Bhava'inya. Every time the father would feel the Divine presence of Shri Sharika in her.

Roopa Bhavani literally means the Form of the Primordial Mother Bhavani. Roopa means form, and Bhavani means the Mother creatrix. The source of Poorna-Prakriti as Bhavani is found in the Rudryamala Tantra, as well in the Bhavani Sahsra Naama. Roopa Bhavani was raised in the then prevalent Kashmiri Pandit religious ethos and atmosphere. She was initiated into the Sharika Mantra by her own father, as said by Roopa Bhavani in the Rahasyopdesha

*sharane aayasa lalliishvarasa
shrii sat gvarasa maadhavaa shivas..*

रने आयसलल्लीश्वरस

श्री सत् ग्वरस माधवाशिवस ।।

It says : "I have descended to submit at the feet of Lalleshvari, Shri SatGuru Madhava and Shiva." They are all One in essence. She is in the Advaita state of spiritual existence with Shri Lalleshvari, her Father turned as Guru Madhav Joo and the Supreme Shiva as the Eternal Prakash/light. She considers Yoga with Bhakti as the spiritual links to be in tune with the Eternal Brahman, which is verily,the Nirvana state of mind.

Divine Roopa Bhavani was initiated

mysteriously into Yoga by Shri Lalleshvari-Lall Ded, through her Spiritual vibrations, which is but the Yogic mystery. Lall Ded had already passed away then . The Yogis do it at their free-will, this is known as the Anirvachaniya Shabda Yoga, in the Shakta Agamas. This state of communication is purely mystic and can not be explained in words. Sri Aurobindo was also initiated into Yoga by Swami Vivekannda, though Swami Vivekananda had already left his mortal frame then. Yogis transcend time and place.

Why Shri Roopa Bhavani pays Her obeisance to Lord Shiva, Lalleshvari and Guru Madhav Joo Dhar?

Shri Roopa Bhavani reveals:

*kari siriya vyadaya chali gaTakaaruya'
sahaza vyachaara tatha saarabuuda.*

करि सिरिय व्यदय चलि गटुकारुय

सहज व्यचार तथसारबूद ।।

The darkness of ignorance will vanish and the Sun of knowledge will lead us to the Sahaj Vichaara. This innate reflection of the Immutable Shiva is the very essence of the Divine knowledge.

The interaction between Ichha- Kriya and Gyana Shakti in the Tantras of Kashmir known as the quintessential of Shaktivad. Shri Roopa Bhavani is not different from Lalleshvari, Shri Madhava and Shiva. They are all One in the essential nature of Atman' -- being the Supreme spirit, the pure essence of the Brahman of the Upanishads. It is the core message of the Rahasya Upadesha to understand the Sat Chit Ananda.

Her blessings are filled up with deep love and compassion. She Says:

sath naa asatu aChinnadaaram.

suuxmo samaadi param brahma soham.

सथ ना असतु अछिन्नदारम ।

सूक्ष्मो समादि परं ब्रह्मसोहम् ।।

The Absolute is beyond Truth and untruth. It is infinite in nature. It is an integral experience, wherein the Atman - the subject, Ishta / the object and Anubhava - experience get fused into One and only one. The Samadhi should be very minute, which can be experienced within the experience of Brahman, which is one's own self. That is Soham "I am That", being the Maha -Vakya of the Upanishads.

As a human being, she excelled in the Divine knowledge. As a great Kashmiri Pandit Woman, she preserved the great heritage of Pandit culture of "Sezar-Pazar and Shvazar." She suffered in a way, as the incarnations do suffer, when they take the human form, eg Shri Sita--the incarnation of Bhudevi. She was subjected to harassment by her mother-in-law, as they did not realise her Divine presence. Her gospel is revered as the SHRI ROOPA BHAVANI RAHASYA UPADESHA. She pays homage to the Guru, followed by the Nirvana Dasha Shloki Stava, Vakya Manjari, Sva Anubhava Ullasa Dashkam, Antar Drishti. In all, Shri Roopa Bhavani has revealed 146 Shlokas, which are Yogic in spirit, Upanishadic in thought, mystic in experience and spiritual in essence. She wanted to lift the humanity from the narrow caste system, superstition, bondage and unnecessary rituals. She preached brotherhood of humanity, moral values and her spiritual revelation is to help the humanity through dedication. She says in the Antardrishti of the Rahasya Upadesha:

*buuyo na biizama ,toyaa na tiizama
vaayu na aakaasham avaataaha sarvam.
na zi brahmaaNDama na Cha khaatma
aatmam*

shakti svaruupam param brahma soham.

बूयो न बीज़म तोया नतीज़म
वायु न आकाशम अवाताहसर्वम ।

न ज़ि ब्रह्मांडम न छ खात्म आत्मम्
शक्ति सरूपम परम ब्रह्मसोहम ॥

I transcend all the five elements, and go beyond, where there is no trace of Bijam - the Primal seed. I do not abide in the cosmos as well. I am not the macro-self inherent in the cosmic egg. I do not see the Atman in the disintegrated forms. I realize the Purna - the whole, which is all perfection. I am verily that Shakti/energy, which is self-existent, self-cognitive, self-projecting power of the Absolute. I am Omnipotent reality termed as SOHAM - I am That. This is the secret of attaining the final Moksha, which is termed as Nirvana, Kaivalyam. It is Shiva Kevaloham.

Her abode of Tapasya / austerities happened to be the Hari Parbat, Wotshan, Lar, Cheshma-i-Sahibi and Waskura. Her mystic Shlokas can be viewed on the Vedic and Upanishadic patterns. People revere her and is being adored with all love and dedication. May She bless all!

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कॉशुर परुन छुनु मुश्किल,
दफ
कल गछि आसुन्य ।
त्वहि छा?

Your Own Page

**Paintings of Lokeshi Pandita, Age 16 Years,
 Daughter of Smt. Renu Pandita & Shri Sanjay Pandita of
 Airoli, Navi Mumbai**



Trisha Hali is an outstanding Player. She lives in Jammu and studies in Model Academy there. She has magic in her abilities as a sports person. A proud Kashmiri Pandit girl from Sopore, Trisha is a National Sub Junior Championship Basket Ball player 2017, National Korf Ball Championship (Schools) 2017 and Inter State Korf Ball Championship 2017. Her Medals tally in Inter-school Tournaments is **3 Gold, 3 Silver and 1 Bronze**.

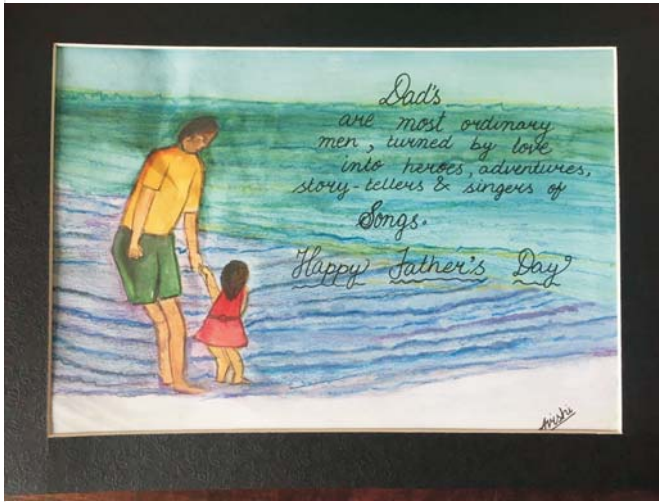
Trisha has been selected as Best Sports Person of the year 2017 at Model Academy, Jammu. She has been selected for Sports Authority of India Basket Ball this year.



**Congratulations Trisha Hali and Congratulations to
 Proud Parents Smt. Sheetal Hali and Shri Raju Hali.**

Your Own Page

Paintings by Avishi Khar, Age 12 Years,
Daughter of Smt. Meenakshi Khar, Thakur Village, Kandivli, Mumbai


BAHUBALI

Painting
by
Master Rishit Kar
(8th Std.)

Grandson
of
Shri M.K.Kar,
Mulund

Report on Zaan Festival, Kashyap Bhawan ~ 26 May 2018

Immediately after revival of Project Zaan, a Community get-together named Zaan Festival-1 was organised at Kashyap Bhawan, Bhawani Nagar, Andheri on 26 May 2018 to carry forward the mission started by the community stalwarts about 2 decades back. The Project Zaan which was earlier a joint Project of the Lalla Ded Educational and Welfare Trust and Kashmiri Pandits' Association is now solely run by Kashmiri Pandits' Association, Mumbai. Highlights of the event were; a Refresher Class on 'How to Read & Write Kashmiri in Devnagari'; an Open Quiz for the audience based on general knowledge concerning Kashmir and Kashmiri literature; Written Tests for the Contestants who had volunteered to answer questions based on the subjects like Kashmir's history, Land, People, Religions, Historical Places, Festivals, Rites & Rituals, Kashmiri Language and our Culture but restricted to the study material provided to them earlier; Comedy in the shape of Ladi Shah and some Kashmiri music.

We had a good gathering of more than 130 people who sat all through the programme and showed good interest in learning the Devanagari-Kashmiri script and the Open Quiz. 25 Prizes were won by the audience.

M.K.Raina, Covener Project Zaan conducted the Kashmiri Reading & Writing class. He explained his point of view that 'If language dies, we will also die' which was well taken by the audience. Audience received his lectures patiently.

A short film on the Life and Works of Padam Shri M.L.Kemmu was shown on the occasion where some community icons

spoke about Kemmu Sahib and his contribution to the Kashmiri literature. The audio-visual clips were prepared by Rakesh Roshan Bhat with feedback from K.K.Kemmu, Late Kemmu Sahib's son.



For Written Tests, the contestants were allotted to 6 Houses comprising Arjundev Majboor House, J.L.Manwati House, J.N.Kachroo House, M.L.Kemmu House, M.L.Mattoo House and Onkar Aima House. Trophies were given to all 6 members of the winning team and Certificates were given to all participants. Apart from this, Trophies were also given to the winners of the Spoken Kashmiri Audio Tests conducted earlier through WhatsApp.

Ladi Shah was performed by K.K.Kemmu. The song and the singer are both called Ladi Shah. It was a great hit bcoz it was perhaps the second time that this Kashmiri traditional folk song was sung in Mumbai. (It was once sung at Rang Sharda long back.) Sumit Patwari sang Dina Nath Nadim's famous song Ba Geva Na Az with music from his guitar. Shri Dalip Langoo, the famous singer and music composer from Delhi agreed spontaneously to recite a Bhajan. He recited some Vaakhs from Alakh Lila of Rupa Bhawani. He has a melodious voice and the audience was greatly mesmerised.

It was a moment of pride to have Vibha Saraf (of film Raazi fame) with us on the show. She reacted very kindly to audience demand of singing the Bollywood item Ba Ha Chhasay Khaanamaej Koor ... She was supported by

Report on Zaan Festival, Kashyap Bhawan ~ 26 May 2018

Sumit Patwari on guitar. She also sang Harmukha Bartal Praaray Madaaeno and Saahibo Saahibo

Those who say Kashmiri language is fast dying were proved wrong today. Small children, in fact four of them namely Vatsal Dhar, Saideep Jotshi, Riyanshi Pandita and Riyaansh Raina sang Kashmiri Rhymes and Bhajan. Riyaansh aged 4 years only sang Okus Bokus and Bishta Bishta Braaryo ... with great clarity and so did others. All of them were awarded prizes.

CDs of the 'Consolidated Lessons on How to Read & Write Kashmiri in Devanagari' prepared by M.K.Raina were released by Shri Rajen Kaul, Ex President (KPA) on the occasion. These CDs along with the CDs of Akruti-Kashmiri Software were distributed free of cost.

At the start of the events, Shri S.P.Kachroo gave brief introduction of the Project Zaan and the necessity to keep our traditions and language alive. He was followed by Dr. Sanjay Dhar, President of the Kashmiri Pandits' Association, Mumbai. Dr. Dhar spoke about the objectives of the Zaan Festivals and stressed upon the Mumbai biradari to give a big hand to such programmes. He also impressed upon the biradari to get themselves registered as Life Members of the Kashmiri Pandits' Association to strengthen it and also subscribe to Milchar to make it self-financing.

Bharat Pandit anchored the programme as also the Open Quiz. Rakesh Roshan Bhat assisted him in conducting the Quiz. Bharat kept the audience spellbound with his humourous jokes and comic quotes. Light refreshment was served midway through the

programme.

As Convener, Project Zaan, It would be my gross negligence if names of other people who contributed greatly to the show are not mentioned here. Neena Kher, Urmila Dhar, Renu Pandita and Rakesh Wattal did an excellent job in planning and arranging the logistics, audio-visual gadgets as also the most crucial thing - selecting, arranging and serving snacks. Chand Bhat did the marvellous job of shooting the entire event with stills and videos. He has proved to be very patient with his work. Chand Raina, Satish Ganju and Suresh Kaul did help a lot during the course of the show. Chand ji as Editor Milchar did not miss to note down every detail in his note book. Thank them all.

I would also like to sincerely thank all those whose names are not mentioned here but who were directly or indirectly associated with the Show.

Last but not the least, Santosh Sasane, the caretaker of Kashyap Bhawan toiled very hard to assist and do the things exactly the way he was instructed. Thank him too.

- M.K.Raina

आधुनिक स्थानों के प्राचीन नाम

वुलर	..	होलर
अंदर कोठ	..	जयपुरा
श्रीनगर	..	प्रवरपुरा
दिवसर	..	देवसरसा
जैनपोर	..	जैनापुरी

स्रोत:

ऑरली हिस्ट्री ऐंड कल्चर आफ कश्मीर एस.सी.रेय

Glimpses of ZaanFest-1 in Mumbai



Glimpses of ZaanFest-1 in Mumbai



Young Artistes Preparing For ZaanFest-2

At **Vinod Sur Shringar**, Link Road, Andheri (W), Mumbai with **Rita Ji Kaul** who is always eager to do something for the community, especially for our children.


Steering Committee, Project Zaan


S.P.Kachru - Head



Neena Kher



Urmila Dhar Zutshi



Annpurna Raina



Renu Pandita



Manju Kasid



Bharat Pandit



Suresh Kaul



Chand Raina



Rakesh Wattal



Sanjay Pandita

Letters to Convener, Project Zaan

Dear Raina Sahib,

I rejoice in the idea of KP community of Bombay getting together to celebrate their roots and bonds, with an apparent prime-focus on their mother tongue, the Kashmiri language.



Language the gateway to culture, which is the gateway to ethos. While KP community has been exiled from their motherland of some 5,200 years, they rightly continue to try to live and celebrate their ethos. But the die has been cast, at least for this part of their history that they diffuse to places outside Kashmir and other parts of the world. But fifty years from now much smaller number of them would use Kashmiri and remember their ethos. Civilizations have been obliterated by the fierce forces of history. But we must continue to persevere to keep our ethos alive as long as we can. Under your inspiration and guidance the Zaan event will not only succeed in its goals but also flourish. It is not for nothing that you are called Masterji.

I remember some twenty years ago, around 1999, you published my entire book, *Meditation on Time*, in Bombay KP community magazine *Milchar*. Here are my observations of the published program of the event Project Zaan:

1. Project's prime focus is on the quiz, therefore, it is a kids' event. I can't see much success for it that way. Have a full-fledged KP function comprising of Quiz, Tea, Snacks and Kathabatha, Selected speakers talk on KP ethos and their future, Music by Neerja Pandit and/or by others, After-dinner tea.

Quiz by itself will not carry the event. Moreover, Raina Sahib is wrong if he harbors the hope that after the quiz event a lot of KP kids will start talking in Kashmiri. He must be

knowing that a modern KP's personality on this matter. While in Kashmir KPs would insist that their kids be talking in Kashmiri, but most of them when living outside Kashmir would not do so. The reason for that is they believe that for their survival their kids should learn Hindustani, English, and other languages.

In U.S. we have had special Kashmiri classes for youth, but it did not produce any tangible result. In the last KOA Camp we had a contest for them in Kashmiri history, and in the forthcoming Camp there will be a contest in Kashmir Shaivism. Raina Sahib should look into them.

At Zaan event all participants should be given the book, *Paradise Lost*, by Prof. Bhan, which covers the seven exoduses of KP's from Kashmir. It is especially important for the youth to read the book, which will make them familiar with the cruel treatment met by their fathers and forefathers. That should inspire them to fight back and preserve their ethos.

The above indicated points are purely suggestive. In no way do I want to second-guess the organizers of the project on why they have created a program as they have. I wish them a huge success.

Maharaj Kaul
maharaj.kaul@yahoo.com

Convener, Project Zaan replied:

Dear Kaul Sahib,

Namaskar. Thanks for your mails dated 21 April 2018 and 26 April 2018. In the mail dated 21 April 2018, you had appreciated the work done under Project Zaan and also appreciated my work. I thank you for that though what I did some 15-20 years ago, was under the able guidance of stalwarts like Late Kachroo Sahib, Late Manwati Sahib, Late Onkar Aima Sahib and Shri P.N.Wali Sahib. It is unfortunate that first three are not with us

Letters to Convener, Project Zaan

now when we are reviving the Project.

As regards your mail dated 26 April 2018, I have to state as under:

The Quiz event is not for kids only. It is open to all age groups. We have had such Quiz programmes earlier also where elders, young ones and not so young ones would participate. Questions asked covered the subjects of Kashmir's History, its land and people, its historical places, festivals, rites and rituals, eminent personalities, religions etc. Under Project Zaan, we published a series of Information Digests in the form of compendiums which form the study material for the quiz programmes. This time we have added Kashmiri text reading and Kashmiri vocabulary also. We have nowhere said that our programmes will enable and enthuse our children to speak Kashmiri instantly. But we are sure, a start can be made. We have first to convince the parents to speak Kashmiri in their homes and before their children. Learning will come automatically. We can't blame our children for our failures. Moreover, we wish those of us who have not gone to Kashmir in two or three decades, to know more about their motherland.

We will be having a short duration class for teaching 'How to read and write Kashmiri in Devanagari', the subject I have been teaching via WhatsApp lessons since 6 months and earlier through Kashmiri classes, to the biradari which include old and young. This short duration class will be sort of revision of what I taught my students (old and young both) through internet. We want our biradari members to learn reading and writing Kashmiri in Devanagari (which few people can do) and learn to use the Kashmiri language software developed for the purpose. This will not only help youngsters (who already read Hindi) to read and write Kashmiri but will also help our litterateurs to

type their material in Devanagari, which otherwise they do in Nastalique or get it done through other agencies. We are distributing CDs of the above software to people free of cost. In between we will be having some Kashmiri music and Kashmiri humour to keep the audience glued.

President Kashmiri Pandits' Association and one from the Project Zaan will speak on the importance to preserve our culture and language.

There will be Certificate and Memento distribution at the end of the programme.

Programme is so devised to complete it in 4 hours' time from 4.00 PM to 8.00 PM. In Mumbai we always have time constraints because people come from far off places and have to reach back in overcrowded trains.

Since this is our first programme on revival, we may encounter bottlenecks but we are sure to gain more experience for the next event we propose to host at our Sharda Sadan at Kharghar, Navi Mumbai in some time. Let us be optimistic and let us keep our expectations high. Your blessings are solicited. Thanks and regards,

M.K.Raina



Dear Shri M K Raina ji,

Namaskar. I extend my good wishes to you for taking this initiative, under the banner Project Zaan for the development of the Kaishir Zaban, in K P diaspora.

With sincere regards

Chamanlal Raina

rainachamanlal@yahoo.com



Namaskar Raina Sahab,

Thank you for sharing this project with all of



Letters to Convener, Project Zaan

us. As I remember you have continued your efforts for a long time to strengthen Koshur language and culture. Kudos to you and Kashmiri Pandits Association.



With warm wishes for continued success in all your noble endeavors.

Jeevan Zutshi

jeevan.zutshi@gmail.com



Best wishes for the event. May this day be a harbinger of good things to come. Our culture and our rituals must be preserved for all times to come, because that is our identity and we love it.

B.L.Dhar

bldhar@hotmail.com



Thank you Raina Sahib. Such initiatives will certainly be beneficial in preserving our culture, which is so important for our progeny.



Regards,

Sqn Ldr B L Sadhu,

sadhubansilal@gmail.com



Great effort Mahra to retain our culture and value system and preserve it. May God Bless you all.

Maharaj Pajan

raj_692@hotmail.com



Dear Raina Sahab,

It is very interesting and inspiring to know of the work you are doing to promote Kashmiri language and promote different soci - cultural activities during the forthcoming Zaan festival on 26th May to be held in Mumbai. Since we live in the UK , our young generation too would benefit immensely from your

experience and I was hoping if there is any way in which we could see a live telecast of your function or at least certain parts of it on Skype or via any other broadcast medium. Alternatively it will also be equally good to get a recording of the programme .

We at Sharda Kashmiri Pandit Foundation UK are always looking at ways in which to develop links with other KP organisations in India and abroad and will welcome any suggestions in this regard from brethren .

Warm Regards

Dr Chandan Kotwal via

kashmir-interchange@googlegroups.com

Convener Project Zaan replied:

Dear Kotwal Saab,

Namaskar. Thanks for your mail and your kind words. Stalwarts like Late J.N.Kachroo, Late J.L.Manwati, Late Onkar Aima and Shri P.N.Wali at Project Zaan about two decades back had coined two slogans. One, 'Let us enforce our identity through our Mother-tongue' and two, 'Our Mother-tongue is the passport to our motherland'. Need of the hour is that we take these slogans forward in the real sense and do something to save our culture and our Mother-tongue. I am not a scholar but still a student of Kashmiri language and am doing my bit in a small way to promote this language among our children. Let our future generations not hold us responsible for letting our Mother-tongue die. I am really encouraged to see people like you coming forward to encourage us and not succumbing to the modern thinking 'Learning Kashmiri language - for WHAT?' I salute you.

I am not IT expert nor an office bearer at Kashmiri Pandits' Association, Mumbai. But I will definitely carry your message to President KPA and see if something could be done to at least record the event. I will let you know in

Letters to Convener, Project Zaan

due course.

Thanking you again,

M.K.Raina

Dr. Chandan Kotwal writes again:

Dear Raina Sahab

Thanks for the reply and I completely agree with you and your erstwhile respected colleagues on preserving our language . This is the least we can and should try to do in order to preserve our Kashmiri Pandit signature for the future and perhaps is the easier option as compared to other ways of teaching our younger generations the customer etc , though we should try to give them a holistic gift of our culture and heritage. I look forward to communicating with you in order to develop links between our two groups for the benefit of the younger generation. I am also not a techie but am aware that live coverage can be done through Facebook and Skype and I am sure somebody in your group who is well versed in these modes of communication will be able to advise on how to facilitate this . Alternatively a recording will do as well .

Warm Regards

Dr Kotwal

[Event was finally put live on KPA Mumbai Facebook : Courtesy Rakesh Roshan Bhat]



Dear Raina Sahib,

Namaskar. Congratulations and good wishes for the success of Project Zaan.

I am not sure if you are aware I happen to be the President of Kashmiri Migrants Welfare Association, Noida for last two years. It has been a very tumultuous period with financial liabilities of our Bhawan depriving us to pay major attention towards



the cultural aspects. However, this has not deterred us from doing our bit in that direction. We recently organized a lecture on Kashmir Shaivism. Around a fortnight back we also organized an immensely successful event Sumran, a homage to Master Zinda Kaul. The programme consisted of a film, lecture and a musical tribute. We now intend to organize a programme in which an expert will impart basic knowledge in Janthri reading to the youngsters. I was wondering if we could request you to allow us to name such events as Project Zaan? We would give due acknowledgement. I also request you to pay us a visit whenever you are in Delhi NCR area. It would be our pleasure to receive you at Kashmireswar Kashyap Rishi Bhawan, A-98, Sector 34. Noida.

Orzu.

Kamal Hak

kamalhak@gmail.com

IMPORTANT

We wish to start a Column in Praagaash on Career Guidance for our young girls and boys. We request management and career guidance gurus to come forward and help us in this endeavour.

Letters to Editor, Praagaash

Dear Raina Sahab,

Namaskar. I am honoured to know that you are bringing out the issue of Project Zaan's net magazine Harvan from this year. It is a matter of pride for me to pen down the message for the said magazine. My heart fills with immense pleasure at your this initiative.



The seeds of an idea sown by you earlier are shaping into strong saplings. I am sure this magazine will turn out to be a platform for the KP community to express their creative pursuits, originality of thought and perception. As you know, the language and culture grow from its own soil but to keep it alive on alien lands speaks volumes about your love and dedication for our mother tongue.

I am confident that it will turn out to be a good vehicle for creativity of thoughts and imagination. I wish you a big success in your endeavour.

With best wishes and warm regards,

Dr. Romesh Raina, New Delhi



Dear Raina Sahib,

I am delighted to learn about the restart of the Harvan journal. I pray to God that it flows the material about Kashmiri Pandit heritage, culture and knowledge as transparently and profusely as the entire pristine water of Harevan spring.

ThathaAsto.



Brij Moza, Kolkata



Dear Raina Sahab,

It was a great pleasure to see the old special issue of HARVAN dedicated to Late Omkar Nath Aima. I find that the magazine has highlighted his life and his achievements in an elaborate manner besides focussing on our cultural heritage.



The magazine is being revived after a gap of a decade which is a great news. Fortunately, ours is an intellectual community so there will be no dearth of contributors to the magazine. However, to maintain regularity there are some editorial functions and skills which have to be honed i.e keep it simple, economical and brief so that there are no gaps in its production and publishing due to the paucity of funds or subscribers in future. Sometimes in our over-enthusiasm we tend to outstretch our resources initially and find it difficult to continue the same for a long period. Moreover, the problem of allocation has to be attended to. Most of our magazines concentrate on our oft-repeated history and culture as also to literature but if you notice most our younger generation is involved in science, technology and business fields. No magazine attends to their achievements. I would request you to please focus on our young generation achievers and ask them directly how did they do it so that others are also inspired. This will encourage young children who are in their adolescence and are looking forward to new paths in the virgin areas. Career counselling could be another avenue as also opportunities available for our children to pursue their

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studies and seek employment besides concessions available for migrants in various colleges and universities all over the country. Let us look forward and carry our young to a new world rather than keep them entrenched in the past. It ,however, does not mean that they should not know their cultural history, language and literature but everything has to be proportionate.

I may also add that whereas Late Onkar Aima was remembered, his relative Satish Kaul (Aima) has been suffering somewhere in Amritsar and has been in dire straits since long. Nobody has bothered about him. He acted in famous Mahabharata as also attained stardom in Punjabi films.

I wish the magazine a long life and a good response from our community members.

Sincerely yours,

**Deepak Kumar Budki, IPS (Retd)
Ghaziabad**



I am delighted to learn that Engineer M.K.Raina has agreed to restart editing Praagaash, a monthly magazine under Project Zaan. The magazine has tremendous potential to disseminate knowledge and facts to the entire community across the globe. My best wishes.

Prof. R.N.Bhat, BHU Varanasi



Namaskar Raina Sahab,
Mattoo Sahab, a typical Kashur Batakot was a person with special qualities. He would receive young and old with similar love and

affection. Mattoo Sahab's dream followed by his untiring efforts in approaching Central and State governments for land/funds/approvals etc ensured that Sharda Sadan becomes the reality. He will be remembered by all KPA biradari for a very very long time.

M.K.Kar, Mulund, Mumbai



Respected Raina Sahib,

Namaskar. It is a great pleasure to know about the relaunch of Harvan after 10 long years. But equally nice is to see our engineer friend deeply involved with our culture and language and rich heritage, what a surprise. The reality is that you have edited our Milchar from Mumbai and aalav from Bangalore in Nagari-Kashmiri for a long. Now after a pause, we see you, the multi faced personality back to serve Kashmiri diaspora community so actively, be it Project Zaan or any other web magazine. Needless to mention here that you have transferred the two famous publications of my late illustrious father into Nagari and published them serially in aalav and are available on net. You deserve lot of appreciation for your untiring efforts for promotion of Kashmiri language, art and Kashmiri literature. I wish you all the success in your selfless endeavours.

Rajinder Premi, New Delhi



Dear Maharaj Krishen,

I must congratulate you for reviving Project Zaan and resuming the e-magazine Harvan in



Letters to Editor, Praagaash

a new avatar, Praagaash. Nearly a decade back I had rued your decision to cease the publication of the magazine. I even tried to persuade you, but you had valid reasons, especially a high-intensity job involving frequent travel that left you little time for the magazine. Now it seems the clock has turned back and you have the leisure and, of course, the energy to resume the magazine as well as to harness your undying passion for perpetuating and propagating Kashmiri. Laudable as your objectives are, I have some reservations about the utility and success of Project Zaan. I may sound rather cynical, but the facts and figures stare at us. Let me be brief.



After our violent expulsion from Kashmir, we have remained in a state of perpetual exile, unable to settle down as a community at one place that would enable us to socialize, provide us a sense of belonging, restore us our distinct identity and give us the power of numbers in order to be counted as a factor in the social-cultural-political landscape of our country. In fact, we are already in a wide scatter in India and abroad, passing our lives as individuals or small groups, forced to speak Hindi, English or the language of the region where we settle. Can we ever organize a gathering of a few hundred people at one time for any major community event? No.

Besides, due to various exigencies of exile and our changing perceptions and priorities during the last three decades, we have also imposed on ourselves certain

unwritten rules and practices that have led us to a path of no return, a self-annihilating course as a community. Our youngsters opt for no marriage or late marriage; a high percentage of marriages end in chronic marital discord or divorce; most married couples produce no children or one child. As a result our numbers are fast declining. We are already in the list of vanishing sects/races. Under these circumstances communicating in our mother tongue has remained confined more or less to our generation or the next after us. Beyond that, our youth can hardly be asked to pick a language which they find of no use in their daily dealings, academics, professions, or in any other capacity.

I am aware of the fact that you have created a WhatsApp group with two-fifty odd members, and that some of them seem enthusiastic to learn Kashmiri. I can vouchsafe it is a good pastime for them, nothing more. I don't think it will make much of a difference in the long run. We tried to introduce Kashmiri to children in migrant camps. Some of the best minds were roped in, including the doyens of Kashmiri literature. A Kashmiri primer was published and copies distributed to everyone. After two or three sessions the attendance dwindled and finally we ended up teaching the primer to ourselves!

We have not been able to even agree on one final script for writing Kashmiri. There have been attempts by several enthusiasts to create their individual scripts – Devnagri, Nastalik, English vernacular, etc. including new versions of Kashmiri primers. Each one of them claims superiority over others. Some

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of our authors have published their works in three scripts simultaneously!

I am not trying to discourage you, only to remind you of the pitfalls. You have all my blessings but, if you and other well meaning members of our society are serious about the language, you better get serious first about the very survival of KP as a distinct entity in the larger Hindu-fold. We need to inculcate the idea of perpetuation of our species before it gets extinct. Start a project - let me name it Project Survival. Once we survive and revive, Project Zaan will automatically take off with it. If there are no numbers there will be no takers. Sincerely

K L Chowdhury, Jammu

Editor Praagaash (also Convener, Project Zaan) writes:

Thanks for your mail Dr. Saab and thanks for the good wishes. While we fully agree with your observations regarding our survival and restoring our distinct identity, we wish to put the record straight in respect of Project Zaan.

Project Zaan was started in 1999 in Mumbai with some specific objectives. Though educating our youngsters about our language was one of the Objectives, it was not the only Objective. Our passion lied first in disseminating information about our place of birth, its land, people and history, which everyone will agree is the right of our younger generations who were not born in Kashmir or did not live there. But we also understand that language is a binding force between all of us and language is our identity, which we should not allow to die so easily. We know working in this field is difficult but a start has to be made somewhere. Many people are not interested

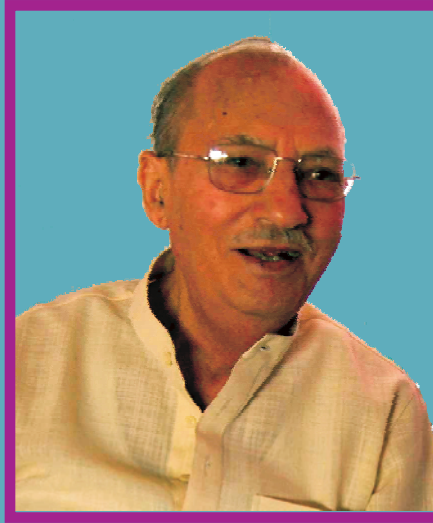
in this language but our slogan for them remains 'We know you are not interested, but we have no plans to give up'. Let us thank Mumbai biradari, they have not let us down. We are moving ahead and moving with confidence. Zaan Festivals are a pointer in that direction. Whether we achieve our goals or wither away half way, can't be said now. Let us hope for the good.

While we leave it to our readers whether they think Project Zaan would achieve its Objectives or not, we fully agree with you to subscribe to the idea of Project Survival to enable our community to survive, live with dignity and not perish. It is a fact that we find it very difficult to organise a gathering of a few hundred people for a community event other than a Hawan where people do come in numbers, at least in Mumbai. Project Survival need to be discussed at every level and at every place where KPs have settled down in good numbers. We fully endorse your view that if there are no numbers, there will be no takers and we are also conscious that numbers not only mean those attending a social function but mean our count in the broader sense. At Project Zaan, we will definitely discuss it and explore ways and means to see that we survive as a community and not perish. Let our readers and also those following us at Project Zaan take a note of it and suggest not only their points of view on the issue but also suggest measures to take it forward. Let Project Survival and Project Zaan go hand in hand.

**Give Project Zaan A Hand
A Big Hand**

SPECIAL
FEATURE

**Remembering
The
Philanthropist**



Late Shri M.L. Mattoo

Mattoo Saab - As I Knew Him

- M.K.Raina

I came to Bombay now Mumbai, in the year 1968 in search of a job. It was not that I was jobless in Srinagar. I was already doing a job there but wanted to move to Mumbai because my bosom friend Romesh Bhan had already come here and told me about fantasies of this place; secondly I was so keen to see 30 storeyed buildings here and also meet film stars who, as a distant relative of mine in Mumbai had told me repeatedly, roam in streets like ordinary people with nobody caring for them. I did see 30 storeyed and higher buildings but did not see any film stars roaming around.

I tried my luck here and there but could not get a job to my satisfaction. Watching me getting frustrated, a friend of one of my relatives here came to my rescue and asked me to meet one Mr. Makhan Lal Mattoo at

Vidyavihar in central Mumbai. My relative volunteered to accompany me to Mr. Mattoo's place, who, he said, was a big gun working with Burmah Shell oil company and cautioned me to observe full decorum while at his place. 'Don't talk too much', he advised me.

We reached Mattoo Saab's place in the early morning on a Sunday. My relative first introduced himself and then me to Mattoo Saab. Mattoo Saab asked us to sit down and be comfortable and

asked me a few questions. He rang up somebody and told him about me. On finishing his talk, he asked me to meet one Mr. Kachroo at New India Oil Mills, Cotton Green next day.

He gave me a slip of paper with Mr. Kachroo's address. Before leaving, we have had tea and I had the honour of having Mattoo Saab's hand on my head. He blessed me. I did not see any big man in him. He definitely had a beaming stature but he was down to earth and smiling.

I joined New India Oil Mills but did not do well there. That is another story which need not be discussed here. So I left the Mill in a huff, and disgusted. I decided to leave Mumbai and go back to Srinagar, which I

did. I proved to be a fool not to meet Mattoo Saab before leaving.

I met Mattoo Saab again in 1995 when after my forced exodus from Kashmir and after staying in Jammu for five years, I shifted to Mumbai. In my curiosity to meet Kashmiri Pandit biradari here, I visited Kashyap Bhawan a number of times till I came into contact with the biradari people including Mattoo Saab, Onkar Aima Saab, N.N.Wanchoo Saab, N.N.Pandit Saab,



Special Feature
 Remembering The Philanthropist ~ Late Shri M.L.Mattoo

Mattoo Saab - As I Knew Him

- M.K.Raina

P.N.Wali Saab and so on. With the flair for writing, I got closer to Wali Saab who was the editor of Milchar. I started writing for Milchar.

I started assisting Wali Saab for editing Milchar in early 1996 when Milchar used to be a 12 page compendium. I was designated as Coordinating Editor sometime in 2001. Mattoo Saab was elected President of the Kashmiri Pandits' Association, Mumbai in November 2002 and since then I had very close coordination with him. Along with Wali Saab, he was also keen to bring Milchar to a standard journal's get up and for this he was ready to sanction finances. He used to shower great affection upon me and was perhaps the only person in Mumbai who used to call me by my first name. I was always Maharaj Krishen for him.

Mattoo Saab was a person of great dedication. Whatever he did in his personal capacity or in order to discharge his duties as President of the Association, he did it with perfect devotion. Whether it was visiting migrant camps in Jammu and offering them relief material, or providing medicines to ailing camp inmates, or providing drinking water purifiers, or providing uniforms, note books and school bags to economically weaker students, he did it with utmost care and humility.

Mattoo Saab was also a trustee of the Lalla Ded Educational and Welfare Trust with which I was also associated. His contribution towards holding Kashmiri Language Workshops and

Zaan Quiz Programmes under the Project Zaan as a Trustee of the Lalla Ded Trust and as President of the KPA was immense. We never felt helpless or handicapped for want of logistics and other support structures when he was around. He was a person who could be relied upon and trusted. He used to be present at the engineering counseling centers along with his team to provide on spot assistance to candidates not only in their selection but also in providing them accommodation in Mumbai. It was because of his sheer hard work and dedication that he was re-elected as President of the KPA for a second term in September 2004.

KPA was allotted a plot of land by CIDCO at Kharghar in January 2004. The possession of the plot was given sometime in mid 2005. Construction of proposed Sharda Sadan was estimated to cost about a Crore of rupees initially which eventually went up to more than two crores during the actual execution. Collection of money was a gigantic task. A Committee to look after the construction and collection of funds was constituted by the KPA and Mattoo Saab was designated as its Chairman. He continued as head of the Sharada Sadan Committee till his last breathe and did a magnanimous work in discovering sources and collecting funds.

You live in our hearts Mattoo Saab. Mumbai biradari will never forget you.

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Special Feature
 Remembering The Philanthropist ~ Late Shri M.L.Mattoo

A Word About Respected M.L.Mattoo

- C.L.Gadoo

Pandit M.L.Mattoo was a noble soul, a great visionary and a good friend. As President of Kashmiri Pandit Association, Mumbai, he took challenging task of building Sharda Sadan, a cultural and social center on acquired land of 600 sq mts at Kharghar, Navi Mumbai. He went all out to collect funds for the said project. He also took lot of interest in developing different other projects like Project ZAAN, strengthening Milchar official organ of the Association.

Pandit Mattoo ji was very compassionate person. He was of the opinion that "innocent exiled children are the victims of history and we all have to compensate them for it. The best way to help them is to assist them in their education."

In an effort to provide some succour to needy displaced Kashmiri students studying in different camp schools in Jammu, the Mumbai-based Kashmiri Pandits' Association donated

schoolbags, uniforms and books in Govt. Camp (Mixed) Higher Secondary School, Muthi Phase II, Govt. Camp (Mixed) Higher Secondary School, Purkhoo, and Govt. Camp High School, Mishriwala.

Pandit Mattoo further added at Jammu, "We have come all the way from Mumbai to meet our people living in different camps here. Donation of school uniforms, notebooks and school bags is part of our endeavour to encourage academics in our exiled community. We are also providing scholarships to deserving migrant students on the recommendation of the principals of the respective camp schools."

While in Delhi, he would take part in different community events and meet his friends and relations at regular basis.

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Our Mattoo Saab

- Dr. Sanjay Dhar

‘Mattoo Saab' as we all knew him, used to call me Doctor.

Being related, we used to interact during marriages at Srinagar and later at Jammu. We used to have good time together as he was a very affectionate person who would force you into a conversation. His brother, also my uncle was killed by terrorists in Srinagar Medical College. This common grief forced us together for ten days of mourning which resulted in he ensuring my marriage and ultimately I landing in Mumbai.

When I migrated to Mumbai, I found

him so passionate about KPA activities which culminated in Sharda Sadan. He arguably was the man instrumental in giving it the shape as he tirelessly worked till it was finally erect. He remains a doyen amongst KPs of Mumbai who ensured the KPA flag continued to flutter in Mumbai. I pray for the good health of his wife and rest of the family.

[Dr. Sanjay Dhar is KPA President]

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Remembering Mattoo Saab

- Chand Bhat

We met at Sh. Ravi Takoo's house-warming ceremony in Kandivali for the first time around 2002. The open terrace and cool night breeze was the perfect setting. Mattoo Sahab was accompanied by his equally charming wife Shyamaji and we got deeply engrossed in conversations that meandered across topics as diverse as our families to politics.

I used to live in Panvel then and he offered to drop me back home. But I only agreed that he drop me till Chembur, which is where he lived. Nonetheless our conversations continued in the car too.

I remember going back home with a lot of new thoughts, old thoughts reinforced and some questioned. Now that's the kind of conversations most of us yearn for.

And one day, while I was travelling to Jammu, my son, who had found himself grown fond of Mattoo Sahab in a matter of just a few meetings, called me to tell me about the shocking yet inevitable news. And however clichéd it may sound, disbelief is what struck me. And then a question: how could a man so lovely, full of life, empathetic, high on morals and principled leave this world so suddenly?

How could he leave us? Leave me?

In the cacophony of sounds that usually accompany train journeys, my thoughts traversed through the times I spent with Mattoo Sahab.

After Shri Takoo's house-warming ceremony, I met him often and soon he was elected as the President of KPA, Mumbai.

He vehemently pursued agendas that would improve the status of KPs in general and KPA in particular. He foresaw the need of a large cultural centre and it culminated in the shape of Sharda Sadan.



Seeing his resolve, community members joined him to make it happen. At times it became difficult for us to match his dedication and passion. He would be there first; morning, afternoon or evening; in sunshine or torrential rains; to meet the architect or the builder or the authorities.

He raised almost 80% of the funds that were spent during his presidency on his own.

I was fortunate enough to watch him do all this work from close quarters and it resulted in an affinity, the mark of which will remain till eternity.

His popularity in the community was evident from the moist eyes of the people who remembered him at the condolence meeting held in his memory. Words like magnanimity and enthusiasm were used often in his reference.

No words can describe Mattoo Sahab's life better than the ones Sh. SP Kachru wrote in Life-Time Contribution Citation conferred on Mattoo Sahab in 2012.

There is something so endearing about his enthusiasm and passion for Sharda Sadan that it would charm even his critics. He, who radiates positivism, is perennially so cheerful and talkative

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that it is impossible not to love him. Embodying ethics, integrity and true caring, it is this exuberance that people find infectious.

A man whose legacy extends as far as his legend and is a patriarchal source of guiding values, evokes memories of an entire generation of Kashmiri Pandits, who set foot in Mumbai almost 60 years back. Retired as a senior management professional, Mattoo Sahab also served as President of KPA.

For sheer enormity of his unwavering commitment – be it delivering aid in migrant camps in Jammu, seeking Government grants in Delhi or laying foundation of Sharda Sadan in Kharghar – KPA Mumbai feels duly privileged to honour Sh. Makhan Lal Mattoo for exemplary dedication that shall continue to influence generations to come.”

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Mentor Monitor - Late Shri M.L.Mattoo - S.P.Kachru

Mattoo uncle almost bumped into me by choosing to sit next to me during my very first attendance upon joining the KPA's BOT, way back in 1998. Soon I was to discover that he would come well prepared, having scrupulously jotted all the points for discussion, in red pen, across a small chit of paper torn from a ring pad. Our proximity would enable him lean over to my side, show the slip & seek my take on the scribbled issues & simultaneously share his. And this camaraderie lasted the entire term of BOT under the President ship of Late Shri J.L.Manwati. My grooming had already begun under his mentorship & this nurturing, in years to come, saw me working very closely & supporting him as KPA's General Secretary during his tenure as President. The term that was to be the watershed in KPA's history in that we acquired the plot of land & started the construction of Sharda Sadan. Over our numerous journeys to & from Sharda Sadan, we would steadfastly reiterate to each other, the conviction to dream, endeavour & achieve. Thankfully, he lived through it all.

There was something so endearing about his enthusiasm & passion for Sharda Sadan that it would charm even his critics. He radiated positivity, was perennially so cheerful & talkative that it was impossible not to love him. Embodying integrity, ethics & true caring, it was this exuberance that people found infectious. The man whose legacy extended beyond his legend, was a patriarchal source of guiding values, evoking memories of an entire generation of Kashmiri Pandits, who set foot in Mumbai almost 60 years ago. Sheer enormity of his unwavering commitment to the community causes, seats him on a pedestal, that seems unrivalled. That I truly miss Mattoo uncle's good natured banter, would be an understatement!

[Shri S.P.Kachru is immediate Ex President of KPA Mumbai]

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Pt. M.L.Mattoo

– R.K.Mattoo, Bangaluru

Pt. M.L.Mattoo was a simple but tough person, a community stalwart full of passion for community work. This is how I would describe him. This is also evident from my personal experience with him which I would like to share with you all.

I received a registered letter from Mattoo Sahib in response to my invitation addressed to him to grace the inaugural function of Kashmir Bhavan, Bangalore on October 6, 2013. To my surprise, the letter contained his personal cheque for Rs. 32,690/- towards donation for this great community achievement in Bangalore. The note accompanied with the cheque was slightly disturbing but at the same time highly emotional for me. Mattoo Sahib had expressed his inability to attend the historical function owing to his ill health. He sent his good wishes with a promise that he will visit the Bhavan after he recovers from the illness. But, he could not make it till his end.

The emotional part of the letter was that the amount of Rs. 32,690/- was the last balance in one of his accounts which he closed and sent as donation. He also said that he was worried about the project under construction at Mumbai (Sharda Sadan) which had got stuck for want of funds. He was perhaps not able to mobilize funds due to his ill health but he assured me that he was working with the team to take it forward and complete it. His desire was to see the Mumbai Bhavan up and functioning.

Pt. M.L.Mattoo's name goes synonymous with Kashmiri Pandits' Association (KPA), Mumbai, not

because he was the President of the KPA but because of his passion to serve the community, especially after 1990 exodus. He would invite people to his house and provide them accommodation and food while they were in Mumbai for any work. Though I had a limited interaction with him, he had influenced me a lot while discharging my duties towards the community.



We both held the posts of Vice Presidents in All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS) under the dynamic leadership of Mr. M.K.Kaw. It was during the world International Conference organized by AIKS and hosted by Kashmiri Hindu Samiti, Karnataka at Bangalore in 2004, when he along with nearly 50 other delegates from all over the country came to Bangalore. He participated in the conference as one of the seniors and appreciated the efforts of KHS, Karnataka for the kind of work undertaken for the welfare and rehabilitation of the displaced Kashmiri Pandits. During his stay in Bangalore, he would pull me aside and initiate a conversation on community welfare schemes especially for women and children living in tented accommodation in and around Jammu.

He was always concerned about mobilizing funds for establishing Centres in Jammu and Udhampur in J&K to impart skilled training to women and make them self sufficient. He had a unique way of convincing his friends and acquaintances for mobilizing funds for

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community welfare.

I have seen Mr. Mattoo frequently visiting Jammu and enquiring with the poor and needy community members. With his personal relations he organized funds from well to do community members settled abroad and helped the needy. His passion and dream to establish Sharda Sadan in Khargar (Mumbai) was finally realized only because of his initial efforts to put it on rails. He would share with me the day

to day developments, including making initial payments, fencing of the plot with pride and sense of achievement. It was during this time when we also started the construction of Kashmir Bhavan at Bangalore and completed in 2013 itself.

The community in General and members in Mumbai in particular will miss him.

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Mattoo Saab. A Father Figure

- Neena Bamzai Kher

Being a father figure to me, I used to call him Mattoo Uncle. Although in our small KP community, all families knew each other but I got to know him very closely once I was involved in KPA activities. He was very humble and down to earth person. To help anybody he would go to any length. During the exodus also, he went door to door to collect relief material in cash and kind to send it to migrants in Jammu. He would personally go and visit migrant camps in Jammu and do a lot of donation at his personal level. Even during migrant students' admission, he would visit various institutions to make arrangement for students' accommodation. His biggest achievement was construction of Sharda Sadan and I can vouch for it and say upto what length he went to make it come true. He was very happy when it was taking shape. I Have so many memories. When I say he was father figure, I mean it

because when we would work together, if certain things did not work his way, he would scold and shout at me the way he would shout at his own children. I have learnt a lot many things from him. I have lot of sweet memories while working with him as a BOT member. May his soul rest in peace.



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**Sign Post
Without Comments**

**Hard work never
killed anybody, but
why take a chance?**

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A Tribute to Shri M.L.Mattoo

- K.K.Kemmu

I had the privilege and honour of working with Mattoo uncle very closely for more than ten years as a trustee of KPA and as the secretary of KPA while he was the President. I refer to him as uncle as he was a father figure besides being friendly both with my father (Padam Shri Moti Lal Kemmu) & father in law (Late Sh.T.N Khosa). It used to be a pleasure to be part of those dinner meetings whenever either of them came down from Jammu and Mattoo uncle and Wali uncle (Shri P.N.Wali) would also join in. The atmosphere would become electric as they would passionately get engrossed in the community matters.

The first time I met Mattoo uncle was in a KPA, AGM at Kashyap Bhawan. It was a routine AGM. He was a trustee and was sitting in the first row of the Audience. As usually happens in most of the AGM's, somebody from the audience was asking questions for the sake of it, typical of some of our brethren (question everything and offer endless free advice, relevant or not). The AGM was dragging aimlessly. Mattoo uncle got irritated after some time and addressed these members which went something like this, "You are asking so many questions and offering so much of advice. Please tell me in simple words, how much have you contributed to KPA monetarily or otherwise. You are one of us and KPA belongs to all of us. Endless discussions and suggestions don't help. We need volunteers to accomplish the tasks outlined and then move onto new goals. Otherwise it is all talk and no action....." I liked it, his forthrightness and 'down to earth'

approach and told him so after the AGM. That was our first meeting.

Thereafter, I came to know at other social events that KPA had bought a plot of land at Kharghar and planned to build a new community center there. It seemed very challenging considering that we were a small community (KPA membership was perhaps less than 500 then) with meagre sources of income. The planned cost of this project was about Rs. one crore. On the one hand it seemed like a dream project to me as I had seen such community centers of Marwari, Jain and Parsee communities at various places and I used to wonder when would KP's have at least one such centre. KPA used to accommodate the students who came for counselling to Mumbai every year for admissions to various technical colleges at the Gurudwara's, Dharamshalla's and other such places. We had no place of our own. This Kharghar center would turn out to be a dream come true and could accommodate the future stream of students. It would also have a diagnostic center, a library and a cultural center. But 1 crore was going to be a princely amount and how was KPA going to raise this sum. It was a mammoth task and most of the biradri members were cynical. When I raised this point with Mattoo uncle he was stubbornly positive. His answer was, "I will get it done whether people support it or not, I shall not rest till Kharghar project is accomplished." He also mentioned to me about some initial Commitments he



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had received from people and trusts within his Knowledge. I learnt that his journey had begun. It could perhaps be summarized as, 'Well begun is half done.'

Whenever I enquired about the status of funds for Kharghar project with the other KPA trustees, there was a common refrain. Most of them had no clue. Some mentioned to me that Mattoo sahib was the only one working on this. One of them even mentioned that if anyone can collect this sum, only Mattoo sahib can. So, he was a one man army trying to accomplish this mission. This made me feel a bit uncomfortable. Mattoo uncle wasn't a young man any longer and he was working on this project single handedly. I started wondering, how one could help him in this onerous task and share his burden. He had already given a call to all the community members to donate Rs.11,000/- each and he would complete the project. This also he pursued single mindedly. He would remind you at the Havan, cultural evening or at any wedding or gathering. Whenever you met him, he would ask, "Have you brought the cheque."

From our family, Sunita gave him the first cheque. He immediately turned to me and asked, "Where is yours?" My response was that I was thinking about how to help him raise some money and If I gave him my cheque now, I might forget about the rest. So I wanted to collect some funds first. This lit up a spark in him and he pursued it to no end. Sunita and I discussed this matter at home many a times. She would remind me that I hadn't given my share (Rs.11,000/-) to KPA yet to which my answer would be same as given to Mattoo uncle. Then she would ask, what

can you do? What do you want to do? I wasn't clear. One day however I just mentioned, if I can at least bring donations of five Lacs that would be some help to Mattoo uncle and I think I can collect at least five lacs. From there the goal became clear. Collect at least five lacs.

In the first attempt I collected about Rs.70,000/- and couriered these cheques to him. He thanked me profusely. Thereafter he would be after me to become a trustee of the KPA but I would politely decline. Some months later, the turn of the BOT was getting over and new trustees were to be elected. I was shocked and surprised when one Sunday morning, Mattoo uncle landed at my house with the form for election to the KPA BOT and requested me to sign. I was reluctant and gave out the usual reason, "No time, Sir." He was persistent. Finally Sunita hit the red button. I still recall her response, "Mattoo uncle is a respected gentleman and he is an elderly person. He takes all the effort and comes to your place with this request and you are making excuses. He needs your help and you know you can help him. Then why make excuses?" My last excuse was, I don't remember my life membership number. He brushed that aside and said, "Leave that to me, You just sign here." That was the beginning of our close association.

I can personally vouch for his commitment to the cause of KPA and the passion with which he worked towards the completion of Sharda Sadan. He would visit the site every Sunday, review the status, pull up the contractor and monitor the progress. He would chase the biradri members, other friends and associates for donations to the KPA. At the cultural programs at Rang Sharda

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one would hear him call to the audience, "*Pansa chiv na dinya. Sharda Sadan chiv na banavun.*" His zeal was exemplary. He would travel to Kharghar every week by whatever means of transport available. If the car and the driver were not there, he would take the ST bus. On one such occasion I found him limping. He had slipped and fallen into a pit at the Sharda Sadan site when digging was going on and had badly bruised his leg. Limping he was, but that hadn't stopped him from visiting the site and that too in a ST bus. After this incident I forbade him from travelling alone to Sharda Sadan and always accompanied him. He would dream, sleep, eat, breathe and think only Sharda Sadan. That was his dedication. What started as a vision had become the mission in his life. Mission not for self but for the community at large.

In between the construction of Sharda Sadan faced rough waters on account of paucity of funds and the project got delayed. It was finally completed but alas, Mattoo uncle didn't live long enough to see his mission accomplished. Physically he may no more be with us but His blessings will always be there and he will stay in our hearts forever. On my part, I was able to collect donations in excess of Rs. 30 Lacs for the KPA solely inspired by Mattoo uncle and towards the fulfilment of his cherished dream.

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Can't Forget You Daddy - Indira Mattoo

Born in 1933, Daddy, as I lovingly used to call my father-in-law, joined Burmah Shell in 1957 as a Trainee and rose to the rank of GM Operations. He retired from the company in 1993. After retirement, he attended to the activities of KPA Mumbai more vigorously, became its President and served it for another 11 years in that capacity. During his association with the KPA, he helped and took up the cause of J&K Migrants wherever possible. He used to help them in their rehabilitation along with his Jammu counterpart Late Shri. Amarnath Vaishnavi by handing over clothes/utensils & other requirements for them in Jammu. He also co-ordinated with Maharashtra Government for admissions of J&K migrant students every year on a regular basis.



It was Daddy's dream to build and complete Sharda Sadan and for that he went to each & every KP for donation. He even approached Ministry of Cultural Affairs, New Delhi for the donation, who were kind enough to sanction an amount of approximately 14 lac rupees. Thus with tremendous passion in him, his dream became a reality but before that he left us in the year 2014 for his eternal peace.

As on the personal front he was a mentor to us and everybody who came for advice regarding career building. He would donate his part of income to trusts and hospitals which we were not aware as family members and which we came to know about after his death only. Further he would also look for and help KP boys and girls seeking marriage alliance within the community.

Daddy was a dedicated soldier of the KP community in Mumbai/Delhi/Jammu because of his helping nature for whatever cause it would be. Love you Daddy. You will always live in our hearts.

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Mattoo Saheb, A Well Wisher of the Community

Rajen Kaul

I recall meeting Shri M L Mattoo (Mattoo Saheb) for the first time in the early 1990 when I came to Mumbai and joined KPA Board as a Trustee for the term 1990-93 under the Presidentship of Shri R C Sheopuri. Subsequently when I took over as General Secretary of BoT for the term 1993-96 under the Presidentship of Shri Moti Kaul, I had several meaningful interactions with him on various Community Forums.

Although between 1996-2010, due to my professional commitments I could not devote enough quality time to serve KPA, we remained in active touch. To my knowledge, Mattoo Saheb during his term as President KPA from Nov 2002 to October 2010 was the main architect in pushing Maharashtra Government authorities and potential KP and non KP donors for kickstarting our iconic Cultural Centre - Sharda Sadan. Mattoo Saheb relentlessly drove himself and his able Board of Trustees and other community well-wishers to raise the basic structure of Sharda Sadan by the time he demitted the office in October 2010.

He had been in touch with me from April 2010 to persuade me to rejoin the new BoT from October 2010 and takeover the mantle of Presidentship. To me he was a major motivator to take on the responsibility to lead the new BoT team to complete the dream Cultural Centre for the community. After I took over as the President in October 2010, I got to know more intimately his immense contribution for this project.

He was a compassionate person, a passionate organizer and a well-wisher of

the community. He would respond to calls for helping the needy community members even at odd hours. He was instrumental in facilitating admission process of KP migrant students in Maharashtra for over a decade.



His selfless service & immense contribution will always be remembered. I am sure his body of work & contribution will be an inspiration to many community members for generations to come.

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काँशुर छे साँन्य
माजि ज़्यव ।
असि पज़ि
पनुन्यन शुर्यन सुत्य
अँथ्य ज़बाँन्य मंज़
कथ करुन्य ।

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Our Babuji

- Surinder Wazir

Mr. Makhan Lal ji Mattoo as everybody knew him, was 'Babuji' for us. He was my first cousin but I looked upto him as an elder brother. His mother was my father's sister and our favourite aunt affectionately called Anna.

As I have heard in my childhood Mr. Mattoo came to Bombay (now Mumbai) in 1950. He joined Burmah Shell Ltd. in their refinery division. He remained devoted to the company and stayed on till his retirement. He was an eager learner, in spite of not being an engineer, his perception and understanding of refinery operations was thorough. He was well liked and respected by his bosses and colleagues.

My first interaction with him was in 1958 when he attended my Yagnopavit Ceremony at Delhi. As a child I saw a young, handsome, fair, rosy cheeked Babuji walk in. To us children he looked like movie star. We spent about two weeks together and he kept the atmosphere charged with his continuous banter with relatives. There was never a quiet moment when he was around. The next meeting with him took place in 1960 when I stayed with them in Bombay for about two weeks. Here is where I saw him working in shifts at his job. Much late in life I realized how tired he must have been working, devoting time to his family, neighbours, colleagues and the community at large.

An incidence comes to my mind. While staying with Mattoo's I saw a small wooden Box (about the size of children's coin box) with a small lock. The box had

KPA written on it. Periodically I saw him put some coins into the box and on enquiring from him he mentioned that this is a collection box for KPA to build a Bhavan. Even at a young age I was amazed and admired his dedication to KPA and his belief in that little box, with coins, building a Bhawan. Later on I learnt that most of the Biradari members had similar boxes to collect funds, and my first donation to KPA was a princely Eight Anna coin in Mr. Mattoo's wooden box. During the last years of his life I saw him totally obsessed with the building of Sharda Bhavan. The amount of energy he expended on this project was phenomenal.

Mr. Mattoo was a devoted family man. He was very attached to his mother and one could see that on her death a part of him died. He loved to be with all relatives and was very close to his brother in law Late Mr. B.M. Munshi. Apart from the family he was popular within Ghatkopar, Chembur area and the Kashmiri community. He was present at all occasions of birth, marriage, deaths in the Kashmiri Community. His parting gift was the completion of Sharda Bhavan. With his loss the family and the community has lost a great personality and a true friend.

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Mattoo Sahib with his BoT at the Pooja Ceremony of Kharghar plot on 12 August 2005.



At the inauguration of Kashyap Rishi Awas Yojana, Ghaziabad in the year 2008.
Photo courtesy: Rajinder Premi



With Late Shanta Kapoor, Shri P.N.Wali, Shri Suriender Kachroo and Sunita Kemmu at Zaan Festival



At Rang Sharda, Bandra



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At Rang Sharda



With family

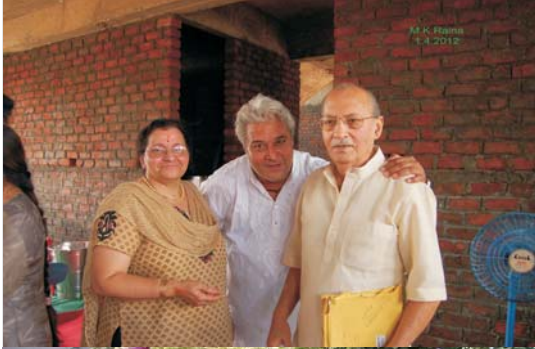


Memorable moments - Receiving Trophies and Awards



At Zaan Festival with
Late Shri J.N.Kachroo and
Late Shri J.L.Manwati,

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