

ISBUND

A Quarterly Newsletter for the Kashmiri Pandit Community



Picture credit: Moushumi Sharma Kaul

From the Editor's Desk

Tulmul is an emotion, just like *monjh haakh* or *dum aloo*, but grander—richer in memory and meaning. The mention of *Zyeth Asthami* always transports me back to the Kashmir of the 1980s, a place alive with tradition and togetherness. I vividly recall the anticipation of our last trip to *Tulmul* or *Kheer Bhawani* mandir on that warm, sunny day in 1989. The early morning chill still lingering in the air as we all piled into a minibus, children and adults alike, our voices blending into a joyful chorus of *leelas*, invoking the blessings of the goddess.

As we arrived at the grand grounds of the temple, the sacred space seemed to open its arms to us. I remember the *bowli*, where we would take a ritual dip, the cold water waking us up fully before we proceeded to seek *Mata's darshan*. The atmosphere was thick with devotion, the sound of more *leelas* rising and falling like a gentle wave. Everyone was lost in deep chanting, yet the moment you looked around, you'd bump into someone you knew—a friend, a distant relative. It was like the whole Kashmiri Pandit community had gathered there, connected by something bigger.

I remember sitting in a perfectly squatted pose, hands folded, embodying the model child in that holy place. *Guruji's* prayers resonating through the temple grounds, I watched intently as he dropped the *kand* into the milky waters of the *nag*. It felt like magic, like we were all part of something timeless and sacred, where time stood still, and all that existed was the sacred connection between us, the goddess, and our shared heritage.

With prayers offered and *prasad* in hand, we ran off to play, our laughter echoing through the temple grounds. We feasted on *looochi* and *halwa*, our tummies and hearts equally full. As the sun began to set, casting everything in a golden light, we began our journey home, tired but happy. Those *Zyeth Asthami* days in *Tulmul* are etched in my heart forever—a beautiful reminder of where I come from.

Every year, the *Tulmul hawan* in London brings those memories flooding back. It's a tradition that revives the spirit of those days, and I'm so glad my daughter gets to witness

a part of my childhood, something so precious and priceless. Thank you to all the organisers and volunteers who make this happen year after year. You not only transport us back to those golden days but keep the nostalgia alive. It's no small task, but you ace it every single time, and for that, I am deeply grateful.

It, therefore, gives me immense pleasure to share this issue of ISBUND, filled with memories from *Tulmul*. In these pages, you'll find personal recollections and memoirs from those who attended this year's *hawan*, their hearts brimming with memories, both old and new. Also included are pictures from this year's *Tulmul hawan*, alongside snapshots from our *Navreh* and *Herath hawan*. And don't miss the **special feature** on our very own Kapil, who had the privilege of making the *Amarnath Yatra* this year. Head over to page 17 to read about his journey. As always, I've thoroughly enjoyed compiling this issue, and I hope you enjoy it just as much.

With best wishes

Team ISBUND



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Maej Bhawani Karri Soruy Rutt

Anu Handoo

Maej Bhawani karri soruy rutt

M*ata Bhawani will set everything right* is the typical way we Kashmiri Pandits face any challenge. *Mata Bhawani* sets the challenges, but she also being a loving mother gives the resources, and the courage to deal with them. Hosting the *Kheerbhawani Hawan* in the UK is a huge undertaking. It involves getting together a huge, dispersed diaspora living in all corners of the country, finding a suitable venue, procurement of goods and services and volunteers and then coordination on the day. Anyone who is involved in the process will confirm that *Maej Bhawani* makes it happen exactly the way she wants. Her smiling face beckons the devotees, enthrals them and puts them in a trance of heartfelt devotion; one where tears start automatically flowing from your eyes at the beat of '*Tulmul Nagas lagay paere paerei*'.

UK Kashmiri Pandit diaspora have been getting together since 2014 to mark the *Jyetha Atham parva*. *Jyetha Atham* falls sometime in June and is the *Ashthmi* when *Ma Ragnya's* birthday is marked. Back in Kashmir we used to go to Tulmul where a beautiful mandir nests in middle of a water body. This iconic mandir is abode to *Mata Ragnya's vighraha* alongside a beautiful tall *Shivling*. I remember being mesmerized by this imagery as a kid, especially as you could never touch the Mata or pour water on the



Shivling unlike other *mandirs*. A single wooden plank over the pond that connected the surrounding area to the mandir felt too precarious for the pujari carrying offerings. The only way you could pay obeisance to Mata in this *Mandir* was by pouring milk, flowers and water in the pond surrounding the mandir. The pond is divine as well. It changes colours from clear or milky or blue during good times; to even red or black during inauspicious times. What is also stuck in my memories is the huge sprawling garden full of giant Maple trees, river and pond for bathing, and the mouthwatering aroma of fresh fried bread (*loochoi*) and hot saffron and almond laden green tea (*kehwa*). Our family often took a picnic to Kheerbhawani to enjoy after an elaborate *pooja* and offering of milk. In the din of temple bells and loud *aartis*, the soul felt light and *Maej Ragnya* felt 'nakhi t dakhi' (next to us and protecting us).

We aim to create the same nostalgia of *Kheerbhawani mela* in the UK every year. The annual event has evolved over the years - from two annual events at different venues, to online events during COVID, to a blissful single big event in 2024, the 11th year. That's what *Maej Ragnya* wanted and she executed it in style. The venue was *Sri RajRajeswari Amman* temple in Epsom. Divine Mother is resplendent in this mandir and this time she wanted to see all her children in one place.

As the preparations started about a month in advance, volunteers from across the country poured their selfless energy in making things happen. Whether it was shopping for key items from all the way in Jammu or bringing *Mata's vigraha* from London, every job had its challenges, every job done with utmost devotion. When the big day finally arrived, all volunteers took their positions, from setting up, to decorating, from cooking to serving, from assisting in hawan to directing the proceedings. As if *Maej Bhawani* took it upon herself to hide our mistakes and imperfections to make it the most wonderful hawan of recent times. The Hawan was divine followed by a beautiful *abhishekam* and *bhajans* of *Mata, Ganesh* and *Kartikeya*. It was followed by a sumptuous *prasaad* and heartwarming *bhajan mandli* after. It was perfect as Mata intended.

With a resolution to get together again year after year, we bid the *Kheerbhawani Hawan* goodbye. We will be back soon.

Tulmul

Anika Labroo

Kheer Bhawani is a revered Hindu temple dedicated to the goddess Ragnya Devi, an incarnation of Durga, located in the village of Tula Mula in Ganderbal district, near Srinagar, Jammu, and Kashmir, India. Named after the traditional offering of "kheer" (a milk and rice pudding) made by devotees, this temple holds great significance as a major pilgrimage site, particularly for Kashmiri Pandits who visit in large numbers during the annual festival of Jyestha Ashtami.



For the displaced Kashmiri Pandit community, Kheer Bhawani symbolizes our enduring cultural and religious identity, especially amidst the exodus and turmoil of the late 20th

century. Despite the challenges and displacement, the temple remains a focal point of our heritage, representing our steadfast faith and cultural continuity.

In the UK, we strive to maintain this spirit by holding an annual hawan, which helps us reaffirm and strengthen our communal bonds despite the hardships we've faced. Each year, on Jyeshtha Ashtami, we gather to worship Mata Ragnya, our revered deity. This year marked the 10th anniversary of our hawan, a significant milestone reflecting the resilience and unity of the Kashmiri Pandit community.

The hawan, featuring fervent prayers and traditional naveed (including walnuts and dum aloo), was held at the Sri Raja Rajeshwari Amman Temple in Epsom on June 29th. This event not only reinforced our cultural heritage but also highlighted our community's enduring strength and commitment to preserving our Hindu traditions.

We pray that Mata Ragnya protect and preserve us all so that we continue to honour her with reverence for many years to come. Let the divine Mata Ragnya shower her blessings on us - always!

Women Who Taught Me Lessons

Brigadier Rattan Kaul

Watching a child prodigy say, “Loser has to kiss someone,” followed by “Puch-Puch” raised my hackles at the child's temerity to be so bold. However, this boldness fizzled out the next moment when the adult model told him, “Abhi tumhara time hai.” What a pity! The bold child gave in so tamely and did not stand his ground. The promo transcended me to my childhood when I had earned the sobriquet of 'Blue Eyed Toddler' for whatever qualities, physical or otherwise, I possessed.

As the youngest, a two-year-old in a divided family, I had to cross a 15-foot courtyard dividing the two households every morning, then climb another ten stairs to reach my grandmother Bhawani Ded's puja room. It did not matter that the elders were not on speaking terms; I had to take prasad from her, come what may. Stern stares from the elders, possibly to dissuade me and stop these intrusions, never worked due to my 'could-not-care-less' attitude for a mission of my liking. That was lesson one. This ritual stopped only with her death a year later. Though as a crawler, I did keep up the ritual for some time, her short memories had inculcated a 'could-not-care-less' attitude in me.

Howling as a four-year-old should have been a potent weapon to get what you want until one day I changed my mind that it is not always so. My howling to get more than my share provoked my grandaunt, Amma Ji, to pierce my left ear with a needle, leaving me bewildered. I grabbed what I wanted and coolly walked off. Lesson number two: once you have set your heart and mind on something, get it whatever way you like it.

As a five-year-old, I had a tough time getting my mother's attention in the presence of some relatives. This reached a peak when another grandaunt, Radhamal, to keep me quiet, thrust nasvar (snuff) into my nostrils. Not for long; after a short sneezing bout had stopped, I snatched her ornately carved silver nasvar casket and threw it from the second-floor window. The melee that followed ensured the dispersal of all in search operations, except my mother. She understood that her son wanted her attention and patiently heard me out. Of course, I had to do the vanishing trick to avoid the ire of Radhamal. When you

want to convey something, ensure you convey it in time, and that was lesson number three.

As a seven-year-old, watching Zoonat Lambardar (Village Head) on horseback in the early 50s, with her high Kashaba (Muslim women headgear of early days), was as good as watching Hillary Rodham Clinton in a limousine as President of the US, with a difference. Hers was a forceful voice, giving orders tamely obeyed even by menfolk. No wonder she was such a success in Wadipora. Her example multiplied my confidence and control acumen—forceful and self-confident—which stood the test of time during my Army days. Lesson number four.

My mother always spent hours with her foster mother, Khuraj, whenever Khuraj visited our place. These visits were frequent even after I was ten years old. Naturally, it peeved me to be deprived of my mother's attention for so long, with her foster mother hogging the limelight. It was then I decided to act—err, plead with Khuraj Ded to reduce her visits to enable us to be with our mother for more time. She did; plead with reason when need be. Aah, that was lesson number five.

By this time, I had acquired the sobriquet of 'Cat Eyed Brat' for many qualities acquired through more encounters, episodes, pranks, experiences, and a list of Do's and Don'ts. I had graduated to my teens and on the steps of adulthood, a poetic expression took me by storm.

Stood I under the shade of a tree

Smooth with laid green grass,

A pretty star looked out

Through the evening window.

There was no other soul

That saw what I could see,

I stood and watched the star

As long as she watched me

In the next few years, as I stepped into adulthood, the ‘expression’ had transformed me to learn the spirit of self-sacrifice, human compassion and love, purity of thoughts, and the art of living from someone close. Life had taken on meaning; but before I knew it, the dream was lost—not for compassion but for the value of self-sacrifice. I stepped into adulthood; not without a lesson but with a loss, though high on self-values. The years rolled in guilt and pangs, forlorn till the lesson revealed a puritanical road to stay on line. The angel took all the burden on her shoulders, steering me to a life of values, to live for someone close, and that made my family. She taught me no lessons, but we learned lessons together.

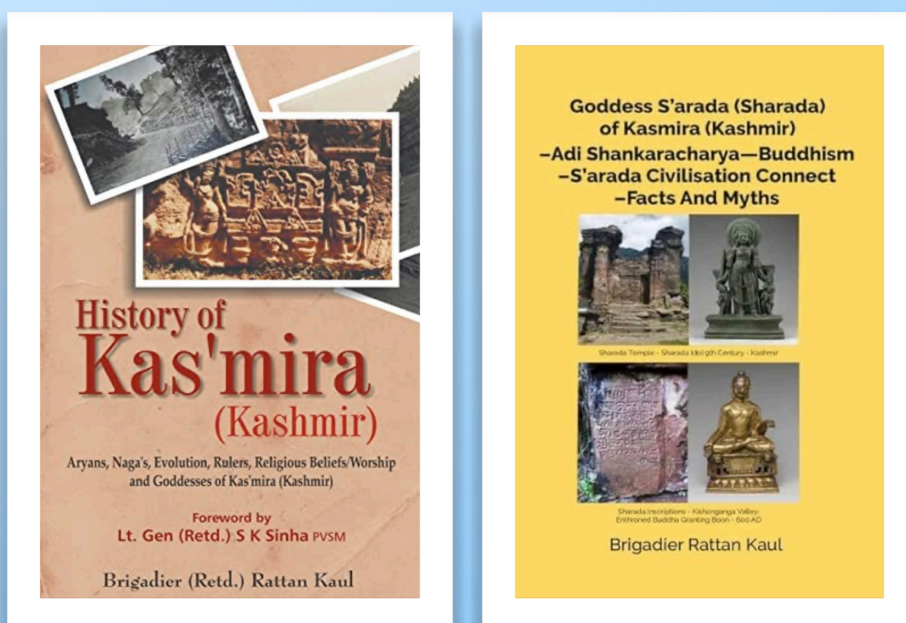
***Graceful smile of heaven’s hand
Smiling beauty that’s spun afar.
Lovely and chaste like white sand,
A veil of wonder laced in light.
Gently on a summer eve
Giving magic to the lifeless,
Each snowflake like a falling star
Till unspoken poem hushed night.***



Author Brigadier Rattan Kaul is a distinguished officer of the Gorkha Rifles (with a notable military career spanning 33 years. He actively participated in the 1965 and 1971 wars, sustaining injuries in battle, and played a key role in the Battle of Sylhet . Brig Kaul has also commanded a brigade in Punjab during a period of militancy, earning the COAS Commendation for his exceptional work.

In addition to his military service, Brigadier Kaul is an HRD, management, and defence analyst. He has authored many books on Military history and Kashmir. Notably, he brought the latest photograph of the Sharda Monument in the Neelam Valley (POK) for the first time in over 70 years. His book on Goddess Sharada (2023) is available online. His fourth book in a decade (2014-2024) will be published soon.

Brig Kaul's extensive research and writings have made significant contributions to the historical and cultural understanding of Kashmir and has published two books.



Chalo Bulaava Aaya Hai, Mata Ne Bulaya Hai

Mridula Kaul

For those of us of a certain vintage, ‘chalo bulaava aaya hai, mata ne Bulaya hai’ (‘we have been beckoned, the Mother is calling us’) in Narendra Chanchal’s fervent, shrill notes will bring back many memories. I never could understand it then but as I’ve grown older (and possibly wiser although the author of this piece provides no guarantee for said wisdom), several lived experiences have substantiated that point beyond any doubt.

I’ve had the good fortune of finding a large extended family by way of KPAE here in the UK - a family that binds each one of us through cultural, spiritual and social events. Like all family events, even with the best will in the world it isn’t possible to attend all but I find myself drawn, time and time again, to the universal appeal and magical power of our beloved Ragnya Devi and the day that commemorates her divinity. I am of course talking about the Tulmul havan conducted annually to celebrate Zyeth Aetham (the eight day of the Jyeshtha month in the Hindu calendar) by the Kashmiri Pandit community in the UK. I had the privilege of attending it this year battling a clash in timing with the untold joys of Saturday drudgery also known as swimming, drama and piano lessons for one’s offspring and relying on the marvels of British public transport that involved changing only 2 trains with poor timing and a bus and yet, it all miraculously worked because our Divine Mother willed it so. I’ve long given up on the dream of the entire family doing everything together (in Rajshri’s Hum Saath Saath Hain mode :-)) and firmly believe that we all must do what we need to if it’s important enough for us.

I am not going to go into the details of why this celebration is important for the community - the learned among us are far more knowledgeable about the history, the spiritual aspects, the traditions and prayers behind all of it. I am here merely to share my experience which is nothing short of blissful. Every time I attend this havan, I am transported to the last time I was at Tulmul, the summer of ‘89 - it was a hot day, the air was filled with the heady smell of dhoop and incense, the Tulmul naag was blue with waters the colour of a tropical paradise and embellished with rose petals whose fragrance

enthralled my senses while I saw offerings of kand being showered into these hallowed waters like snowflakes. The aroma of lucchi halwa surrounded us and I felt like I was in a trance. I sat down on the cool floor of the temple watching the decorated idols in the middle of the water and being mesmerised by the lilting leelas sung by the elders of the family, parents, aunts, uncles. I remember the other younguns darting outside, playing, some lying under the shade of a tree. For me though, it felt like I was home.

I am so grateful to everyone that organised the Tulmul Havan of 2024 to make it such a blessed, beautiful, sacred and joyful event but more so because like a real family that has so many parts of lineage, everyone came together, in all humility, with complete shraddha and unconditional love, chanting 'Maej Sharika kar daya, kar daya he Bhavaeni' ('have mercy on us Mother Sharika, bless us on Bhavani'). Thank you for taking me home. Jai Kashmira !



Tulmul Travels

Astha Zalpuri

Being a Kashmiri Pandit, I have heard a lot about the Kheer Bhawani Temple from my parents and grandparents. During my childhood, I used to sit with my grandmother and listen to stories about the temple and how the colour of the water would change as a sign of an impending calamity. In the 90s, my family moved to Delhi, unaware that they would never be able to return. After 35 years, on August 9, 2024, I took my parents back to the Kheer Bhawani Temple. I could see the excitement in my father's eyes as he recalled how he used to bathe in the Jhelum River in front of the temple. He said, "I always wanted to come back here, but I didn't have the heart to do it. I didn't know if it would be possible in this lifetime."

I don't know much about this place, but Kashmir has my heart. It was my dream to bring my parents back here and show them what they've been yearning for all these years. This time, I know I will return, to my home.





My Amaranth Yatra

Kapil Dhar

By the Kripa of great Bholenath, this year I took the pilgrimage trek to Shri Amarnath cave. It was an amazing experience, both, spiritually and physically.

On the way to the magnificent cave, the 15km long trek of steep heights, the beaming snow-clad mountains of South Kashmir make the scenery mesmerizing. The serenity of the surroundings, the refreshing energies in the breeze and the blessed vibe of devotees look like a spiritual festival. The prayers and bhajans of the devotees throng the entire trek, it sounds like Shiva's own corridor calling the devotees in His great abode to have a glance at the meeting point of Maa Parvati and Shiva.

The story goes that Lord Shiva shared the secret of immortality and the essential responsibilities of an eternal being with Maa Parvati as part of the Amarprem katha in the sacred Amarnath cave.



The Calling

At the KPAE havan in Birmingham, earlier this year, Dr Sanjay ji (Saproo) kindly offered me to come along for the pilgrimage and now when I reflect it sounds like a real calling from Mahadev. The procedural formalities for the pilgrimage are more sophisticated now than a few years ago. The administration wants to track all the footfall on both the trek routes (Pahalgam and Baltal) and each person must have a tag that is provided at the start of the trek, it is much like an employment badge that corporates use for access control.

An advance plan is advised and there are certain registration documents also required before a person can start the trek. All these preparations have their own charm while one looks forward to the great trek for the “appointment” with the Bholenath. The pilgrims are given a date on which they can trek, there is a limited tolerance to the changes in the date, if any.

The pilgrims range from young people to senior citizens, the administration has agreed on the age range of 13 years to 70 years, considering the lack of oxygen at the higher altitudes and steep climbs on the way.

Having grown up in Kashmir, I have lots of memories when the relatives and elders in the family used to go for Shri Amarnath yatra and narrate beautiful stories after coming back, talking about the scenery, devotees, porters, horses available for the trek, and generous Bhandaras (the free community kitchens) hosted by business houses, societies, or communities enroute to the cave at major milestones.

The climb and the options

We took the steep but shorter path, Baltal valley route. Baltal valley is a base camp for Shri Amarnath yatra, and the climb starts from there. From Sonamarg, a popular tourist destination, Baltal is 15 kms and the vehicles can take the pilgrims up to the Baltal base camp only. We started the trek early in the morning at 4 am after an overnight stay at Baltal, it is advised for acclimatisation and for making the appropriate timing for the Darshan.

The pilgrims can take tents or stay at the Bandaras, if there is an arrangement, in Baltal valley. The Bandara economy is a great case study, it is humbling to see how the volunteers generously support the pilgrims through their effort, time, and attention, in addition to the moral support. The pilgrims are supported to take on the trek as calmly as they can, removing the concerns for the different conveniences like food, medical needs, or shelter. The Bandara volunteers also inspire the pilgrims to make sure that the littering, wastage of food or any damage to the facilities are avoided. The government also deploys paramilitary forces for the security, rescue, and medical support enroute the pilgrimage right from Jammu onwards.

The other route for the cave starts from Pahalgam and is a longer route of nearly 35 kms, however, it is less steep, with the scenic views aplenty. More and more people prefer the longer route if they can spare a few days for the trek. I am keen to take that route in future if Bholenath is merciful.

The great trek and Darshan

The first check point on Baltal route is at Domel, where the pilgrims are given the tags for their identification. The tag has all the details of the pilgrim including the ‘next of kin’, address, medical information, etc. This helps the authorities to provide the required support in case of any eventuality. The steep ascents greet the pilgrims immediately after Domel, and the first 5 to 7 kms

are very challenging. The body must navigate different oxygen saturation levels within the short range of distance as the altitude varies immediately and goes up to 15000 ft by the middle of the trek. And this is how the pace needs to be maintained to strike the balance between effort and comfortable breathing. Sometimes people can feel breathless and may need medical assistance.

We reached the mid-point of the trek, Barari top (15000 ft) around 10 am. There were options to take the horse for the trek, but we chose to continue on-foot. After the mid-point of the trek there's a subtle descent towards the cave but altitude stays above 13000 ft. This third quarter of the trek is very pleasant as more scenic views greet the pilgrims, the beautiful glaciers on top of the Himalayan peaks make a wonderful backdrop of the selfies and group pictures of the pilgrims.



The cave already offers a magnificent view as we step into the last quarter of the trek. Exactly, at this point, I received a phone call from my daughter, and I was able to show the cave to my family on a video call, it was amazing to note that the mobile networks are managed quite effectively at such a remote height. Like any large endurance trek or run, the last quarter stretches a bit even though the finish point is in sight. But here it was altogether different experience as one could already be in the court of Lord Shiva and each step towards the cave was already enhancing the spiritual proximity. All the devotees suddenly start appearing familiar, the chants of 'Har Har Mahadev' and 'Jai Baba Barfani, Bhooke ko ann, pyaase ko paani' greeting one another and morally picking up the energies of all.



The two routes (Pahalgam and Baltal) meet at the Sangam junction of the trek, just before the last mile to the destination and one notices the porters, horse men, and palkiwallas station around the area to let the pilgrims alight and take the last stretch on their own. The helicopter service is also made to make its stop farther from the cave, near Panchtarni. The weather has largely warmed up over the years, I found it very warm during my trek, mostly above 15 degrees of temperature during the day, although evenings and nights were colder.



Finally, we made it to the cave at 1.30 pm, the multiple cloak room facilities near the cave help one to be light for the darshan and the mobile phone usage is prohibited at the cave. Some pilgrims choose to take a dip in the Amravathy river (a tributary of Chenab) that flows in the vicinity, as one can imagine the water is extremely cold. The Shrine board has centralised the prasad distribution, which is very effective to manage the traffic of pilgrims.

The final set of the stairs takes one to the cave, where the darshan is managed by the deployed security personnel to maintain the appropriate traffic of devotees. The devotees are guided to venerate at the Himling of Bholenath and Maa Parvati, giving reasonable time to everybody. The noticeable dip in the temperature in the cave is amazingly refreshing. It immediately whizzes past the exhaustion of the pilgrims, as if, Shiva breathes energy into His devotees for their journey of devotion. At that point of time, the eternity looks real. I was able to stay through the 4pm Aarti and experience those great moments a little longer.

The descent and the memories

We spent a fair amount of time at the cave and allowed the tired to take some rest, finally starting the descent at 5 pm. By a few hours into the descent, Purnima moon graced the skies with a wonderful moonshine sneaking through the sharp Himalayan peaks. It looked as if Bholenath was providing us the divine light from his own crowned moon to make sure we are safely back into the base camp of Baltal. Contrary to intuition, descent can be challenging too if the climb is steep and add to that the speed at which some of the fellow travellers of other species (horses), carrying the pilgrims or the supplies raise the dust on the path that has been treaded through the day by thousands of people.



The pilgrimage of Shri Amarnath is very special for the people of Kashmir as it reminds us of our own roots in Kashmir and how much we revered Shiva in our routine life. The influence of Shiva and His values are prevalent in all our life events, rituals, philosophies, and ways of living.

By the grace of Shiva, I was able to visit many temples in Kashmir during this trip like Jyeshtha Mata mandir, Mattan Sun temple, Shankaracharya mandir, Hari Parbat Sharika mandir and Mata Kheer Bhawani Mandir. It was very humbling to go back to many of these sacred abodes of our revered deities for the ages, it gives one a perspective of belonging, somewhat like a new-born sapling discovering its roots by looking inwards.

Har Har Mahadev!

Siyah Raat

Maneesha Kachroo

सियाह रात

सर्दी की इस सियाह रात में ज़िंदा दफना रहे हैं हमको,
बुग़ज़ इतना की आखरी ख्वाईएश भी न पूछेंगे !

करले वो कयास की हमें फ़नाह कर दिया,
दफ़न है, पर हम तो बीच बनकर फिर फूटेंगे।

दरख्त की जड़ें तो इसी ज़मीन में रहेंगी अहमक़,
देखते जाओ हम शाखाएं कहाँ तक ले जाएंगे /

जिन गलियों कूचों में हँसके झगड़के बीता बचपन,
वहाँ क्या अब मूक दर्शक बनके जाएंगे ?

बेघर करके मकान जला दें हमारा,
राबता कहाँ मगर वो मिटा पाएंगे।

लिहाफ बिछाते हुए, लिहाफ ओढ़ते हुए,
दिल टूटते हुए, खिरचियाँ चुभते हुए,
अशक़ सूखते हुए, खून गिरते हुए,
ख्वाब मरते हुए, दर्द जीते हुए,
रुकावटे रोकते हुए, कामयाब होते हुए
कई मौसम आएंगे अहमक़, कई चले जाएंगे।

सर्दी की इस सियाह रात में ज़िंदा दफना रहे हैं हमको,
बुग़ज़ इतना की आखरी ख्वाईएश भी न पूछेंगे !

सर्दी की इस सियाह रात ज़िंदा दफना रहे हो हमको,
क़सम सरज़मीन की, बहार की उस सुबह, हम वापस लौट आएंगे।

Siyah Raat

Sardi ki is siyah raat mein zinda dafnaa rahein hain humko,
Bugz itna ki aakhri khwaeesh bhi na puchenge!

Karlein wo kayaas ki humey fanaah kar diya,
Dafn hai, par hum to beej bankar phir phootengey.

Darakht ki jadein to isi zameen mein rahengi ahmaq,
Dekhtey jaao hum shakhaaein kahaan tak le jaayenge.

Jin galiyon kuchon mein hanske jhagadkey beeta bachpan,
Wahaan kya ab mook darshak bankey jaayenge?

Beghar karke Makaan jala dein humaara,
Raabta kahaan magar wo mita paayenge.

Lihaaf bichatey hue, lihaaf odhtey hue,
Dil tuttey hue, khirchiyaan chubtey hue,
Ashq sukhatey hue, khoon girtey hue,
Khwaab martey hue, dard jeetey hue,
Rukawatey rokatey hue, kamyab hotey hue.
Kayin Mausam aayenge ahmaq, kayin chaley jaayenge.

Sardi ki is siyah raat mein, zinda dafnaa rahein hai humko,
Bugz itna, ki aakhri khwaeesh bhi na puchenge!

Sardi ki is siyah raat zinda dafnaa rahey ho humko,
Kasam Sarzameen ki, Bahaar ki us Subah, hum waapas laut aayenge.

Kashmir

Kabeer Ganjoo

Isbund Poem: Kashmir

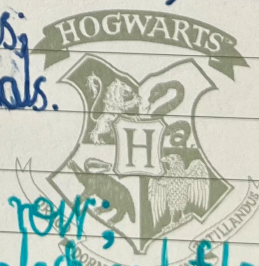
Wooden houseboats sturdily float;
Intricate carvings my eyes note;
Glorious lotuses bloom in pink and white;
On the Dal Lake, as it glistens in the light.

Snow-capped mountains dominate the sky;
Bright red cable cars seem to fly;
Colossal pine trees replenish the hope;
Of skiers and sledgers while they race down the slope.

Chrome yellow dots sprinkled all around;
Radiant as the sun, the mustard does surround;
The relentless wind whips my face;
As the breeze picks up its pace.

A raging river gushes through jagged rocks;
Lime green hills watch over it like hawks;
Horses graze in sprawling fields;
Their lustrous fur shining after meals.

Multicoloured tulips, row upon row;
Surrounding fountains as they splash and flow.
The Gates to Heaven on Earth are open!



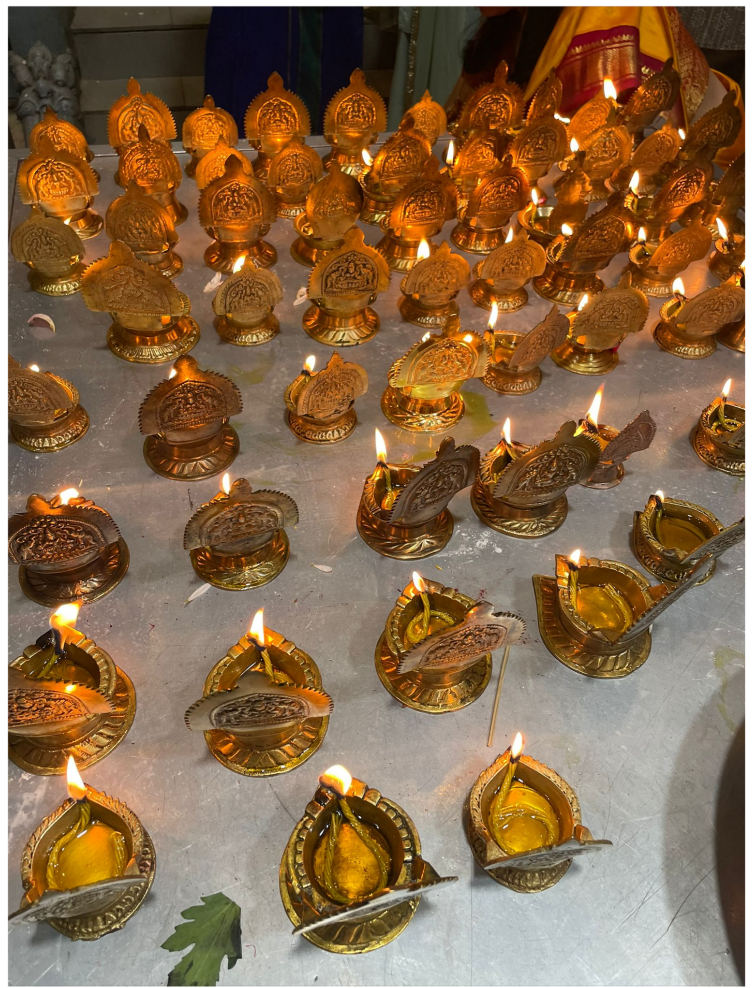
Kheerbhawani Hawan

29 June 2024









Navreh Celebrations

20 April 2024









ISBUND next issue will be in December 2024.
Please do get in touch with us at isbund@outlook.com