

R L Bhat's book 'The Persian Narrative of Kashmir-A Corrigendum' released

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Writers Club Jammu, SAMPRATI, the organization of Kashmiri writers, on Tuesday released the book 'The Persian Narrative of Kashmir-A Corrigendum' by R L Bhat and published by Gulshan Books, Srinagar.

The book was released in a function attended by a large gathering of writers, intellectuals and leading lights of society at K L Sehgal Hall, here.

The function was presided over by noted writer and Professor, Prof A.N. Sadhu, erstwhile of Jammu University. Eminent educationist and noted Professor of History, Prof R.L. Hangloo, ex-Vice Chancellor of Jammu University, Jammu, was the Chief Guest and the ex-bureaucrat and noted Punjabi and Urdu writer of the state, Khalid Hussain and the well-known journalist and broadcaster and noted Dogri and Hindi writer Dr Nirmal Vinod graced the occasion as Guests of Honour.

The work was introduced by the writer, journalist,



Dignitaries releasing R L Bhat's book at Jammu.

Shiban Khaibri.

In his examination of the work through his erudite paper, Khaibri told that this is the 3rd book of Dr Bhat in his exhaustive project on the history of medieval Kashmir, which began with the 1st book 'Kashmir After Kalhan' and continued with the 2nd book, 'Kashmir Under Shariyat'.

In this book, Bhat conducts a critical examination of five Persian source books of Kashmir history, namely, Taariikhi Rashiidi of Merzaa Haidar, Intikhaabi Taariikhi Kashmir of Abdul Qaadir Badaayuni, Taariikhi Firishtha by Abdul Qasim Khaan Hindi, Bahaaristaani Shaahii by

author unknown, Taariikhi Haidar Malik Chaadnuurah.

The study examines the narratives given in these Persian chronicles, book by book, and collates them with the eyewitness records written before these Taariikhs were written, showing how they transformed the narration of Kashmir history and why. This is a major study on Medieval Kashmir.

The function was conducted by Kashmiri writer, Tej Sagar, while the noted author, poet and critic B K Sanyasi, one of the senior-most members of the Samprati, welcomed the audience. Noted litterateur, A K Naaz, President Naagraad, the sister

organization of Kashmiri writers, presented the vote of thanks.

The speakers lauded the huge analytic effort examining the whole gamut of Persian histories of Kashmir on the well-reasoned basis of the pre-existing eye witness record of Kashmir history which is available in Sanskrit histories of Joonaraaja, Shriivara, ShukaPandit and others and the earlier Persian work of Sayyid Ali. Through this extended analysis The Persian Narrative of Kashmir - A Corrigendum by R L Bhat, showed that unwarranted slants have been inserted into the history of Medieval Kashmir and strange myths have been imposed upon it.

Through his earlier works, Kashmir After Kalhana and Kashmir Under Shariyat, Dr R L Bhat has brought out the earliest record of the Medieval Kashmir, written by writers who lived in the very age.

These writers present the most authentic record of their times. Later writers, especially those writing in Persian, had no other

source and could derive only from this record, which predated them by centuries.

The Persian Narrative of Kashmir - A Corrigendum by R L Bhat, bring out their fidelity to this pre-existing record and examined the lack of it, wherever found so. That makes the work a seminal contribution to the historical research on Kashmir, delving into the very nuances of it.

This, said they, has been a basic flaw in historiography of Kashmir, leading to countless aberrations and wrong takes on the history of Kashmir. Dr Bhat's work shows that much that is being told and taught about medieval Kashmir is not borne out by the earliest records of the period. Most importantly, the work does not go by hearsay or folklore but examines the eyewitness accounts of the authors who lived through the times. The speakers pointed out that the information given in the work cannot be denied since it is supported by profuse references to the earliest record given for each point.

NAUP announces Shikha Bandral as LS candidate for Jammu Constituency

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: National Awami United Party (NAUP) declared Shikha Bandral as its candidate for the upcoming Lok Sabha (LS) elections in the Jammu Reasi constituency.

The announcement was made today by the Party President, Sandeep Singh Manhas, who emphasized the significance of empowering women in political leadership roles.

In his statement, Manhas underscored the cultural importance of women, likening them to the embodiment of prosperity in Indian culture.

He reiterated NAUP's commitment to uplifting deserving individuals, especially women, and pledged to prioritize the concerns of the marginalized.

Addressing the media, Shikha Bandral shed light on the pressing issues faced by the Jammu province, particularly the grievances of the Dogra community. She criticized previous administrations for allegedly prioritizing Kashmir over Jammu and



NAUP President, Sandeep Singh Manhas talking to reporters.

failing to address the needs of the Dogra people.

Bandral expressed disappointment with the current BJP government, accusing it of perpetuating the trend of favoring Kashmir at the expense of Jammu. She highlighted the lack of infrastructure development and questioned the neglect of potential tourist destinations like Baderwah, Patni Top, Rajouri, Poonch, Basohli, and Bani.

Citing the revocation of Dogra certificates and the absence of concrete measures for their reinstatement, Bandral asserted NAUP's commitment to

advocating for the rights of the Dogra community. She vowed to be a vocal advocate for the aspirations of Jammu residents and promised to champion their cause in the national arena.

NAUP's decision to field Shikha Bandral as its Loksabha candidate reflects its dedication to inclusive representation and its unwavering support for the marginalized communities of Jammu. With Bandral at the helm, NAUP aims to challenge the status quo and usher in a new era of progress and prosperity for the region.

Nidhi Aapke Nikat to be held simultaneously at 2 venues across Jammu and Ladakh

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, will be holding Nidhi Aapke Nikat 2.0 - an awareness and outreach program - simultaneously at two venues across the two union territories on March 27, Wednesday. The venues are GDC for Women, at Kathua and Defence Institute of High Altitude Research (DIHAR) Murtse Colony, Leh. Employers and employees of aforementioned areas would be sensitized about provisions of social security, besides covering themes of "Filing Grievance" - how to file grievance on EPFGMS, other grievance filing provisions e.g. CPGRAMS, other portals; education on Digital Service, awareness and fraud prevention; and rights of employees in respect of employers. The aim of the program is to ensure broad based partici-



ation, awareness, and grievance redressal and information exchange network closer to the stakeholders of EPFO.

The PF Commissioner, Rizwan Uddin, RPFC-I, RO Jammu and Ladakh informed that subscribers, pensioners, establishments, employees representatives, and industrial chambers are advised to actively participate in Nidhi Aapke Nikat Program. The programme at Jammu, and Leh-Ladakh would be addressed by the District Nodal Officers Devinder Singh EO/AO, Sandeep Kumar, and SS respectively. The programme focused on reaching out to the stakeholders and creating

awareness about schemes of EPFO viz. PF Pension, and Insurance, addressing queries and grievances of stakeholders, taking feedback and suggestions from stakeholders, employees, employers, Industry Association, Contractors.

PF Commissioner appealed all industries to extend the Social Security benefits to all the eligible employees from the very first day of their joining in the establishment.

Handholding session was also held to sensitize the employers about PF provisions and modalities. Important initiatives of EPFO such as e-Nomination, Online Claim Filing, Principal Employer Dashboard, and Updation of KYC in UAN etc would be touched upon. Grievances related to the updation of member profile through Joint Declaration, Death Cases would be heard and registered during the program.

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Jammu under the aegis of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Government of India, in collaboration with Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce (DICCI), commenced the third batch of the Capacity Building Program on Small Business Development.

The inauguration took place at the picturesque IIM Jammu Jagti Campus, heralding a new chapter in entrepreneurial empowerment. The event was inaugurated by Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director of IIM Jammu.

The third batch comprised 35 participants hailing from various parts of the country, including individuals from the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.



Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director of IIM Jammu during launch of third batch of Capacity Building Program.

Among the notable attendees were Prof. Jabir Ali, Dean Academics, Dr. Mahesh Gaddekar, Chairperson of the Centre for Small Business Development, IIM Jammu, Dr. Vivek Sharma, Chief Innovation Officer (CIO) at the Centre for Entrepreneurship and

Innovation, IIM Jammu and Naren Karunakaran, Consultant at the Centre for Diversity Cell and Inclusion, IIM Jammu. The ceremony commenced with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp, symbolizing the enlightenment and empowerment that the program seeks to instill.

Dr. Mahesh Gaddekar, Chairperson of the Centre for Small Business Development, IIM Jammu in his welcome address, provided an overview of the program, setting the stage for an enriching journey of learning and growth.

Prof. Sahay emphasized the significance of discipline in entrepreneurial endeavours.

He urged the participants to articulate their expectations and fully engage with the program, leveraging the resources provided by the government.

Stressing the importance of peer learning and collaboration, he highlighted the program's role in bridging skill gaps and nurturing 'Job creators' instead of 'Job seekers'.

Prof. Jabir Ali shed light on the remarkable journey of IIM Jammu and the genesis of the Capacity Building Program, envi-

sioned by Padma Shri Dr. Milind P. Kamble.

He emphasized the creation of a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem in the region and the Institute's commitment to fostering innovation and inclusivity.

Through this project, handholding mechanism for local small businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs in the vicinity of U.T of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh where 20 SBDUs will be established in the U.T of Jammu & Kashmir. 2 SBDUs will also be established in Ladakh.

The Capacity Building Program on Small Business Development Units by IIM Jammu sets the stage for transformative growth, empowering aspiring, and existing entrepreneurs to realize their dreams and contribute meaningfully to the socio-economic development of the nation.

Skyrocketing airfares affects domestic middle-class tourists' access to Kashmir

MASROOR AHMAD

SRINAGAR: Airfares have tripled on some domestic routes in India due to reduced competition. In the past five years, several airlines like Jet Airways and GoAir or Gofirst have wended up operations due to financial, technical problems and bankruptcy, and the revival of these two airlines is close to zero. With only one or two airlines operating many routes these are becoming more expensive routes and people are not in a position to afford luxury flight tickets.

Skyrocketing airfare for Kashmir have turned the excitement of hundreds of tourists into dismay as the dream destination is becoming an unattainable luxury for many potential visitors.

Kashmir for decades has been a heaven for travellers, who seek solace in its serene valleys and embrace the warmth of its culture. But as demand soars, once affordable flights have become out of reach for middle class tourists.

A return air ticket from Delhi - Srinagar to Delhi these days costs anywhere between Rs 20000 to Rs 22,000.

This makes some holiday destinations abroad such as the UAE, Thailand and Malaysia look cheaper with return air tickets per person costing as low as 18000.

Skyrocketing airfares have forced many tourists to visit Kashmir by bus this season. "We have travelled to Srinagar from Gujarat in our own car as air tickets were so costly. A group of tourists from Gujarat told STATE TIMES that they could also go to Dubai at such a price.

He said there should be capping on airfares so that more and more tourists can visit Kashmir.

"We do not expect this as all are private airline companies and the government has no control over these companies; how can we demand the government to take up this matter with airline companies," he said. Tourist Traders Association is also in dilemma after seeing skyrocketing airfares to Kashmir; he said, adding that this airfare was affecting the flourishing tourism industry in the Valley.

"We have seen business flourishing in the past two and half years. Hotels, guest

houses, houseboats are full and Shikara and Ponywallas all were happy but unfortunately this airfare hike affects the industry during the peak season", he added.

On an average 12,500 passengers travel to and fro in 74 flights to Srinagar daily these days which is 3000 more compared to winter months - January and February.

Last year, a parliamentary panel had asked the government to maintain a perfect balance between the commercial interest of the private airlines and the interest of the passengers. It was done to enable the private airlines to grow and at the same time the interest of passengers be kept in mind so that they are not fleeced in the grab of commercialization.

However, airline companies argue that the surge in prices was simply reflection of supply and demand, pointing to the high costs of fuel and operational expenses. They cautioned that any attempts to regulate prices could lead to reduced flight availability and ultimately harm consumers.

Haq Insaaf Council hosts webinar on Uniform Civil Code

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Haq Insaaf Council, a leading advocacy organization, on Tuesday conducted a thought-provoking webinar on the theme "In Pursuit of Legal Consistency: Unravelling the Discussion on Uniform Civil Code."

The webinar, moderated by prominent Advocate and Chairman Syed Zeshan, brought together legal experts and scholars to delve into pressing issues surrounding the Uniform Civil Code (UCC).

Distinguished speakers, including Dr. Kartika Bakshi, Dr. Neha Gupta, Dr. Sumitra Singh, Advocate Parvez Nazir, Rumi Nazir, Dr. Nitin Sharma, Chief Advocate Towseef Dar (Advocate on record), shared valuable insights on various facets of the UCC and its implications on legal consistency, equality, communal harmony, national integration, and the evolving nature of legal systems.

Dr. Bakshi and Dr. Gupta emphasized the significance of legal consistency and equality before the law, stressing the importance of a secular state. They shed light on the need for implementing a UCC to achieve these objectives. Dr. Singh,



Advocate Parvez Nazir, and Rumi Nazir highlighted the role of the legal framework in fostering unity and inclusivity among diverse communities, emphasizing the importance of communal harmony and national integration. Dr. Nitin Sharma and Advocate Towseef Dar explored the evolutionary trajectory of legal systems, advocating for adaptability

and modernization to address changing societal dynamics effectively.

The webinar provided a platform for engaging discussions and the exchange of ideas, enabling participants to delve into the complexities of legal issues surrounding the UCC and propose innovative solutions.

Advocate Syed Zeshan expressed his gratitude to the speakers and participants for their valuable contributions, underscoring the significance of such initiatives in fostering a deeper understanding of legal issues and driving positive change in society.

Haq Insaaf Council reiterated its commitment to organizing meaningful events that contribute to the advancement of legal discourse and the promotion of justice and fairness in society.

J&K Police Drill Instructors awarded Commendation Medals by GOC 16 Corps



GOC 16 Corps Lt. Gen Navin Sachdeva honouring drill instructors of JKP.

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Two drill instructors of the Jammu & Kashmir Police, were honoured with commendation medals by the General Commanding Officer of the 16 Corps Lt. General Navin Sachdeva during his visit to Corps Battle School (CBS) Bhalra, Baderwah on Tuesday. Drill instructors SgCt Zahoor Ahmad, CTC Lethpora, Awantipora and

SgCt Kewal Krishan from Sher-e-Kashmir Police Academy Udhampur were honoured for their exceptional dedication, proficiency, and contribution to training and discipline within the J&K Police force. The commendation medals, awarded by the General Commanding Officer, 16 Corps, signify the exemplary service and commitment exhibited by SgCt Zahoor Ahmad

and SgCt Kewal Krishan in their roles as drill instructors.

The ceremony, held at CBS Bhalra, was attended by dignitaries, officials, and fellow police personnel, who lauded the commendable achievements of SgCt Zahoor Ahmad and SgCt Kewal Krishan. Their dedication and diligence serve as an inspiration to their colleagues and reflect the ethos of excellence upheld by the J&K Police.

Pertinent to mention that nearly a thousand freshly recruited police officers of the rank of Sub-Inspectors including about 60 probationary DSPs of the prestigious Jammu Kashmir Police Service are undergoing training at Corps Battle School of the Indian Army at Bhalra in Baderwah.

CUJ students bag over 100 job offers

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Central University of Jammu (CUJ) started 2023 placements on a high note, bagging over 100 job offers, the institute said in a statement.

A positive hiring trend prevails as the campus has been abuzz with visits by organisations like Thomas Cook, HDFC life, Satguru travels, APML, Kalvium, Ultra tech, STG for the Campus placements drive students. Students from various departments appeared for the interviews in around 26 companies visited the campus through online/Offline mode so far. The Offer letter issued to students with highest package Rs 8.49 lakh internationally and Rs 7.5 lakh lowest for domestic has been rolled out.

Large numbers of paid internships were offered to other students which would entitle them to a full-time job offer after the successful completion of the internship program based on their skills and requirements of the firm.

Training & Placement Officer, CUJ under the patronage of Vice Chancellor Prof. Sanjeev Jain has organised a string of campus placement drives for students and they were eager to embark on rewarding careers in banking, insurance, sales and Tourism. Training & Placement Officer, CUJ, Viraj Magotra said that University is a preferred partner for Industry leaders and year after year, the students of CUJ have been sought by the top businesses. He said that CUJ has emerged as an Institute of repute, where students are equipped with the skills and knowledge as demanded by the industry, even as the university has tie-ups with prominent national and international industry leaders for joint research and guidance.

Rollback Agniveer Scheme: SSP urges Union Govt

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Sainik Samaj Party (SSP), JK UT President Col SS Pathania urged union government to roll back Agniveer scheme immediately.

Considering the global geo political situation and on going wars between Russia - Ukraine and Israel-Hamas, it is imperative that, in light of combined threat of China and Pakistan, no way security and sovereignty of our country is comprised, he said adding that no recruitment during COVID period has already diluted considerably the strength of our standing army and further dilution will be detrimental in our war waging capabilities against our adversaries.

Cutting down training peri-



od of recruits and exit of 75 percent of soldiers after 4 years, will put a serious dent in our combat edge, he said.

Rehabilitation of Agniveers after 4 years is a serious problem and lateral placement, may not work out as planned by the government, he said adding that there are multiple agencies which are using trained soldiers as mercenaries, who are fighting their wars in different

countries and also suffering fatal casualties.

Previous Chief Gen Narvane in his book 'Four Stars of Destiny' had expressed his serious apprehensions on concept and efficacy of Agniveer scheme.

He went on length of stating that Naval and Sir Chiefs perceived this scheme as a bolt out of the blue.

There is a great possibility of Agniveers being lured by anti national group or people and use them against our own country, Pathania said adding that reduction in pension bill was the criteria, based on which government had launched Agniveers scheme and must be rolled back or modified where in 50 to 75 percent Agniveers are retained in the service.