



OFF 'D' CUFF

The one who shows the right path is Krishn

According to philosopher and academic As a r v e p a l l i Radhakrishnan, the theory of 'avatar' is an eloquent expression of the law of the spiritual world. "If God is looked upon as the saviour of man, He must manifest Himself at the physical level. While living in a physical body it is very much possible for the aspirant to gain access to higher levels of consciousness and attain Self-realisation. Far from being an obstacle, human nature can, in fact, become a perfect instrument of the Divine."

The fact of avatar, descent, indicates that the Divine sees nothing wrong in manifesting Himself at the physical level. While living in a physical body it is very much possible for the aspirant to gain access to higher levels of consciousness and attain Self-realisation. Far from being an obstacle, human nature can, in fact, become a perfect instrument of the Divine."

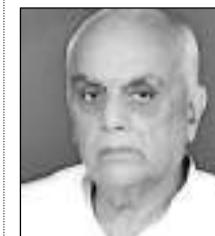
According to Radhakrishnan, it would be equally true to say that the incarnation of Krishn is not so much the conversion of Godhead into flesh as the taking up of manhood into God. He plays his role as the Divine teacher, the noble guide, who trains his pupil by showing him the right direction and eradicating all his doubts through his words of wisdom. The pupil, Arjun, represents the struggling soul whose mind is surrounded by forces of darkness and whose power of discrimination has completely eluded him.

At a stage when his whole being is bewildered and he does not know what action is to be taken, he takes refuge in Krishn, the Jagatguru, world teacher, and pleads with him earnestly to bestow upon him the grace of enlightenment. "I am thy disciple. Illumine my consciousness. Remove what is dark in me. Give me that which I have lost, a clear rule of action."

Anup Taneja

# Kashmir's Vichar Nag-A Ruin of its Glorious Past

ER. P.L. KHUSHU



The Valley of Kashmir is famous throughout the world for its mystical, spiritual and ecological beauty, when it used to be known as the "Paradise on Earth".

Kashmir is admired for its spiritual ecstasy of having housed lot more spiritual abodes in the shape of historical temples, mosques, scenic abodes of spiritually rich saints, Sufis and Peers, which used to be located in lush green valleys and forests, ringed by snow-capped mountains, crisscrossed by rivers and studded with lakes and the like. The beautiful valley claims a glorious past of grandeur beyond imagination. The antiquity of the monuments and various architectural structures tell tales of a rich legacy and a refined sense of culture and art, along with the spiritual serenity of religious places surrounded with perennial springs and lush green environments, to balance the ecology in a fashion, so that it fits in with the abodes of spiritual seers for their spiritual pursuits.

The mystical beauty of Kashmir can be attributed to the story of its creation which bears credence to a typical mythology and an often repeated historical fact of very earlier times. History and its off shoots are privy to the fact, that, once upon a time, the valley was a lake, deep as the sea, and the mystical playground of the Gods of Cosmos.

As they say, it was haunted by a demon that plundered the valley and tortured its people. The miserable inhabitants appealed to Kashyap Rishi, the celebrated spiritual saint of that time, to save them. Kashyap Rishi through his spiritual powers drained the lake of its waters. The demon was slain, and the valley was named after its savior, Kashyap-Mar or the Kashmir of today.

Owing to its sacred origin the valley used to be known as Rishi Wari with abounds in temples and other places of worship. The onslaught of militancy and terrorism in Kashmir ever since 1990, transformed it in to the present state of ruination. It was compounded with the mass exodus of the Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley due to the Jehadi impact. About 145 Hindu shrines and temples

including Uma Nagri (Brari Angan), Kathleshwar Mandir, Raghunath Mandir, Bhairov Mandir were burnt down by the terrorists in Kashmir. This is only a small summary about the whole story of exodus. Today, the temples lie in various stages of ruins, but nonetheless exude evidence of their glorious past.

One such a location the Vichar Nag located in the outskirts of Srinagar city has its own pathetic tale to tell. Once rich in biodiversity of many different kinds including scores of natural springs, Vichar Nag owes its fame to an ancient Shiva temple that finds its mention in the Kalhan's Raj Tarangini. The temple site has as many as three springs whose waters came out in the shape of a small brook, joining the other one at 'Mukhta Pukhri' and after covering a sizeable distance, the water would flow into Anchar Lake, via, Puj Kadal. Vichar Nag is famous for its spring and two old Shiva temples. One temple is made of chiseled and dressed devi stones. There are two springs with the main big spring as the centre of attraction and sanctity. The spring has a length of 430 feet and breadth of 35 feet. Big sized 'Devi' stones have been used for construction of stairs to the spring on the west and south sides. In the middle of the spring there is a stone cylinder of about 3 feet height with a Shivalingam resting on it. Before the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits in 1990 the water from the spring used to come out in the shape of a small brook, joining the other brook called 'Mukhta Pukhri'. After covering a sizeable distance the water used to flow into Lake Anchar. Till early 1990s from the time immemorial, the spring water contained many fish. The other feature of the spring is that the water turns ice cold in summer and lukewarm in winter. In the vicinity of Vichar Nag, there were many springs earlier which have been lost over the time, largely due to local encroachments and apathetic approach of disinterested care by the local population.

In the vicinity of Vichar Nag, there are many springs and water of some of the springs has clinical value as it is useful in treatment of some skin diseases. Vichar Nag had a number of willow trees in its surrounding and now almost none of them can be traced. Even Kalhan Pandit had mentioned existence of walnut trees in Vichar Nag and mentioned about the simplicity of Kashmiri Pandits living in and

around this temple. Vichar Nag is in the heartland of Naushara locality of outer Srinagar. Famous Anchar Lake is adjacent to this monumental pride of ancient Kashmir.

Vichar Nag has also a historical place on its east known as Awanta Bhawan dating its origin to the King Meghawana and this place finds its traces in Kalhan Pandits Rajtarangini as built by Meghawana's wife Queen Amrita Prabha.

As per its religious & historical importance Vichar Nag was the seat of discussion, hence the name, Vichar. It was in this temple that Kashmire Brahmins used to discuss "Panchang", the almanac of the Hindu calendar, showing the chronicle of months and seasons, religious occasions of the year, etc, with a record of good and bad omens as per Vedic theology. It is said Jagat Guru Shankaracharya also visited this temple for discussion. Kashmir has been always a seat of learning and it is believed that The 2nd Fourth Buddhist Council (Sarvastivada tradition) is said to have been convened by the Kushan emperor Kanishka (127-151 CE), perhaps in 78 CE at Vichar Nag in Kashmir. Before 1990, on Chaitra Amavasya, the last day of Kashmiri calendar, a festival was celebrated at this place. On this day, devotees used to take a bath in the holy spring and there after performed Puja in the Shiva Temple known as 'Vichar Sahab'.

After the migration of Kashmiri Pandits, the maintenance of the temple suffered badly. With the empathy of the state government to preserve the site, the place steadily fell into a state of despair, damaging not only the temple site but threatening the entire area. The surplus water from the springs has nowhere to go but to inundate the surrounding area. The effluents of the drains constructed around the locality without any civic sense, of this great spiritually rich epic hermitage of highest religious belief and patronage of Kashmiri Pandits, from times immemorial, composing household waste gushing into the temple site, has turned it into a huge swamp emanating an unbearable stench. All the temple structures have drowned in the muck and the place once a centre of attraction and sanctity has turned into a garbage den. The 1990s saw the exodus of almost all the Hindus of Vichar Nag and the temple maintenance suffered badly. With lack of interest either in the history of Kashmir or in an ancient temple, it fall into a state of dis-

repair, in the callous hands of administration, particularly the civic authorities and the concerned district administration of district Srinagar.

The temple turned into ruins and vandals desecrated the idols and damaged excellent murals, which were centuries old. The springs appear as having been used as garbage dumping ground and were almost invisible in the wild vegetation that has grown in the temple complex.

The Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor is most respectfully requested though this description of the sordid and horrific condition of Vichar Nag at this point of time, by this author on behalf of Kashmiri Pandits, who are in exile, when Vichar Nag is now in a state of extinction, to order and ensure its restoration to its original position of glory and ecological balance. Its further neglect at the hands of the concerned government and civic authorities would mean a great loss to the spiritual and the historical ethos and magnificence of this sacred religious heritage belonging to the displaced Kashmiri Pandits in particular and the general historical background and importance of the cultural heritage of Kashmir of the Saints and Sufis in general. Let someone concerned from the government visit this denigrated and outraged religious place of Kashmiri Pandits at the cruel hands of time and come and see that the Vichar Nag spring is now an abode of filth and garbage. Vichar Nag, is now seeing dogs; resting in its place, where the location used to see petals of roses and flowers of sorts.

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uncultured, oblivious to social thinking, adopting wrong behavior, being in the quagmire of heinous crimes is the result of internet today.

The addiction of internet and mobile phones has become such among the youth which is not taking the name of getting rid of it. If this problem is not controlled in time, then the time to come will be very frightening.

Parents are very worried about the direction in which the children are running. At present the whole world is in the arms of the Internet.

The long time spent online and the soft life of children confined to the screen of smart gadgets, there is nothing to say, but this situation in itself indicates the seriousness of the situation. Neither the opposition to the Internet nor any question is being raised on its usefulness.

Vijay Garg

## YOUR COLUMN

### Internet world affecting mental and physical health of children

Dear Editor,

Children are at the last step of our thinking today. It is seen that a different world is settling in them and they are becoming young overnight at the young age of learning. Due to the Corona era, we all use mobile, computer and TV. But spending more time, especially children. When they are in front of the television, our condition becomes very pathetic, because we are not able to watch the programs of our choice and are forced to watch the programs watched by the children. This statistic is really alarming that 65 million children of

the playing age live on the Internet in the world of the Internet. There is no doubt that the Internet is a vast storehouse of knowledge, but it should also not be forgotten that this store of knowledge is more superficial. Although despite all this, even the elders do not hesitate to seek the help of Google Baba, but the addiction of Internet in children can not be justified under any circumstances. This directly affects the physical and mental development of children. The most worrying thing is that due to internet addiction, children are getting more psychologically impacted. It has emerged in the recent report of India Internet 2019 that there are around 450 million internet users in the country. In the country, 65 million children under the age of 11 use the Internet regularly. However, in the changing scenario, this figure will be higher if the data of Internet usage of children below 5 years is added further. In fact, smartphones have changed everything.

Are children, are old people using mobile phones in a big way. PC or laptop or smartphone, kids are ahead in using the Internet. Whatever be the reason, the use of Internet by such a large number of children and if it is said that the use is not an addiction then it is a serious problem in itself. Children's sociability and sensitivity are being lost. Traditional games for physical and mental development are now turning into video games. Children are becoming increasingly aggressive by playing kill-killing games. There is no time to even talk to each other. Obesity, irritability, sadness and physical activity are decreasing in children. Getting lost in yourself is becoming an addiction. This internet is going to end the mutual interaction. While social media, internet, ultra-modern mobile and fast networks have worked to connect humans with each other, its dangers and side effects have also emerged. Smoking cigarettes, abusing, being dominated by

uncultured, oblivious to social thinking, adopting wrong behavior, being in the quagmire of heinous crimes is the result of internet today.

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## Make every last person of UT educated: LG's message on World Literacy Day

### STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has greeted people on the eve of International Literacy Day.

In a message, the Lt Governor said that World Literacy Day reminds us

that there are still many people who lack proper education in today's world, which is driven by Knowledge and Scientific Innovations.

"Education is the only means that frees us from the darkness of ignorance and backwardness.

He called upon all the educated people of J&K to spread awareness and put their efforts in making every last person of the UT educated and empowered with knowledge of the modern world.

observed the Lt Governor. He called upon all the educated people of J&K to spread awareness and put their efforts in making every last person of the UT educated and empowered with knowledge of the modern world.

Earlier the committee held deliberations with NHPC about its reservation in jobs and other welfare measures in favour of weaker classes of the society including SCs, STs, OBCs and other disabled people. The committee also enquired from the NHPC office bearers about its CSR activities and programs carried out in different areas of the country for the upliftment of these sections of society.

It is to mention here that the Parliamentary Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment consists of 31 members, 21 nominated by the Speaker, Lok Sabha, from amongst the members of Lok Sabha and 10 from Rajya Sabha nominated by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha from amongst the members of Rajya Sabha. At present, the committee consists of 21 members from Lok Sabha and 9 members from Rajya Sabha (one seat from Rajya Sabha is vacant).

The committee was apprised that the centre is providing exemplary services to all the differently abled persons of the UT. It was given out that the centre besides giving clinical support services, is providing different kinds of aids and appliances to these persons. The centre is also organising awareness programmes and outreach activities for the benefit of these people, the committee was informed.

It was also said that the centre is running several academic programmes like Diploma in Rehabilitation Therapy, Diploma in Prosthetics

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Persons with Disabilities so that they can lead productive, safe and dignified lives.

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