

LADOV
A VILLAGE OF MY DREAMS

CHANDER M. BHAT

LADOV

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I AM THANKFUL TO

MY WIFE

NANCY

FOR HER EVERLASTING SUPPORT AND FOR
SHOWING THE WAY OF COURAGE AND FAITH.

MY SON

NAREN

FOR BEING PLAYFUL AND NAUGHTY AND
SHOWING THE WAY OF JOYFUL LIVING.

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1.0 HISTORY

The scenic and beautiful valley of Kashmir is open to view, beyond the Pir Panjal, after crossing the Banihal Tunnel, 2194.56 metres above sea level. The valley is nestled in North-Western folds of the Himalayas, and is encompassed by tall and towering mountain chains on all sides except for certain passes and a narrow gorge at Baramulla, formed by the river Jhelum; between the two parallel mountains...the Pir Panjal and the Kazi Nag.

Mountains on all sides girdle the valley of Kashmir. The Nanga-Parbat and Tosh Maidan in the north, the Mahadev, Gwash Brari and Amarnath in the South, the valley has Pir Panjal in the Southwest and Kazi Nag in the Northwest. The Harmukh, guards the valley on the eastern side.

The valley of Kashmir presents an interesting morphology. The particular charm of the valley is its sudden rise in altitude, which lends it a changing colour of flora, which is so charming that it pleases the mind. The scenery is ever changing and unending and one is totally engrossed not to lose sight of these beautiful physical features.

The *margs* or mountain meadows, which are quite numerous on the tops of the range of hills immediately below the Pir Panjal and the northeastern mountains, are a peculiar feature of the valley. These *margs* or pasturelands are covered with rich pasturage, (green grass) which afford sustenance to the animal flock during summer months.

The Karewas (*Wudars*) are the unique physical features of the Kashmir valley. The Karewas are flat-topped terraced features, developed in the moronic deposits of the Pleistocene glaciations. The Karewa is a Persian name of '*Wudar*', which in English is referred as Plateau. Kalhana, in his Rajatarangini, speaks of "*Damdar Udar*".

With flat surfaces, these Karewas occur mostly on the right bank of river Jhelum i.e. Mattan, Anantnag, Tral, Awantipora, Pampore, Letapora, Sambora, Khrew, Zewan and Ladov.

M.A. Stein writes in Kalhana's Rajtarangini, "The Pargana, which adjoins Srinagar from the southeast, in olden days, was known as *Vih*. It extends from near Puranadhithana to the *Vastrvan* spur near *Vountpor* (Awantipura) and comprises a wide semicircular tract of fertile Karewa lands. In ancient times the district took its name from the village of Khaduvi, the present Khruv.

The site of Pandrethan or Puranadhithana has already been fully noticed. About two miles higher up the river lies Pandchuk village with some ancient remains and traces of a stone bridgehead, probably of late date. Adjacent to this village is another village known as Sempor. This may retain the name of Simhapura founded by King Jayasimha in Kalhana's time.

Less than two miles to the northwest of Sempor lay the village Zewan, the ancient Jayavana. Prof. Bulher correctly identified it already on the basis of the happy and exact description given of it by Bilhana. The poet mentions in this "place of high rising monuments" the "pool filled with the water, sacred to *Taksaka*, lord of snakes". This pool still exists in the Taksaka Naga, which is visited annually by the pilgrimage to the separate Tirtha. It is, in fact, the only Kashmir Naga, which is distinctly mentioned in the Tirtha list of the Mahabharata (III. ixxxii. 90). Abu-Fazl

records the interesting fact that this spring was popularly held to be the place whence the cultivation of saffron flourishing in this neighbourhood originated. In Akbar's time the cultivators, undoubtedly Muhammadans, worshipped at this fountain at springtime. It was customary to pour cow's milk into it to secure a good omen for success of the crop.

About two miles to the northeast of Zewan one comes on gently rising ground to the village of *Khunmoh*. It is, as already stated above, the ancient *Khonamusa*, famous as the birthplace of Bilhana. The latter in the *Vikamankadevacarita* gives an enthusiastic description of the charms of his home. The saffron fields, which Bilhana mentions, extend close to the lower of the two separate hamlets, which form the village. In the upper hamlet is a sacred spring called *Damodaranaga* with some sculptured funeral steles and a few fragmentary inscriptions. On the hillside above the village issues another Naga, which under the name of *Bhuvanesvari* is visited on the pilgrimage to *HARSESVARA*. The latter Tirtha lies on the summit of the high ridge, which rises to the north of the village. It consists of an '*Svayambhu*' Linga situated in a small cave and enjoys considerable popularity.

The chief place of the then Vihi Pargana is now the town of Pampur, the ancient Padmapur, about four miles southwest of Khunmoh. Padma, the powerful uncle of the puppet-king Cippate-Jayapida, founded it in the beginning of the ninth century. Padma is said by the Chronicle to have also built a temple of Visnu-Padmasvamin. To his may possibly have belonged the scanty remains of an ancient temple, which have been described by General Cunningham. Close by is the Ziarat of Mir Muhammad Hamadani with some fine ancient columns and ornamented slabs which are likely to have been taken from this temple. Also the other

Ziarats of the town show similar remains. Padampura owing to its central position in a fertile tract seems to have always been a place of importance and is often mentioned by Kalhana and the later Chroniclers.

Proceeding northeastwards of Padmapura one passes first Balhom, a large village, which in the *Likaprakasa* and *Tirthasamgraha* figures as *Balasrama*. Under a large Deodar near it Baladevi is now worshipped in the form of an ole stone found in the neighbouring rivulets and canals. They were apparently used in recent times as stepping-stones, which would account for their preservation. At the foot of a rocky spur, which descends from the mountain range to the north, lies the picturesque village of Uyan, one mentioned by Kalhana under the name of Ovana. It has a large sulphurous spring visited by the sick.

About two miles further east one reaches the village Khruv, the ancient Khaduvi that, as we have seen, gave to the district its former name. There is abundance of fine springs in and about Khruv; Abul-I-Fazl mentions them as objects of worship and estimates their number as 360. Above the village a so-called '*Svayambhu-Chakra*' or mystical diagram is shown on a rock. It is held sacred to Jvalamukhi-Durga and largely visited by pilgrims especially the Kashmiri Pandits. This shrine forms the Isht Devi of maximum Pandits of the valley.

Only a mile to the southeast of Khruv is the village of *Sar*, until recently the seat of a flourishing iron-industry. Kalhana mentions it by the name of Sanara as an Agrahara founded by King Sacinara. The Ziarat of Khwaua Khizar, which stands here near several small springs, is built with remains of a Hindu temple.

About two miles southwest of *Sar* are found the well preserved ruins of a temple near the village of Ladu. Bishop Cowie has described them. It is remarkable for having a circular cella, the only one known in Kashmir. A small square cella to the east of this temple has been annexed to a neighbouring Ziarat.

LADOV – A Village of My Dreams

Chander M. Bhat

Near the south end of the Vihi Pargana and on the bank of the Vitasta lies the village of *Latpor*. An old gloss of the Rajtarangini identifies it with Lalitapura, a place founded in honour of King Lalitaditya by his architect. The king, according to the Chronicle, was not pleased with the attention; in any case no importance seems to have attached to the place. There are no old remains above ground, but the local tradition still knows of King 'Laltadit' as the founder of a large town on the neighbouring Udar.

According to Guldastai Kashmir by Hargopal Kaul, Ladhu Pandit, a minister of Raja Saka during 2409-72 K.E, founded Ladov village. Ladhu Pandit also build a temple there.

2.0 STATISTICAL DATA OF ADJACENT VILLAGES

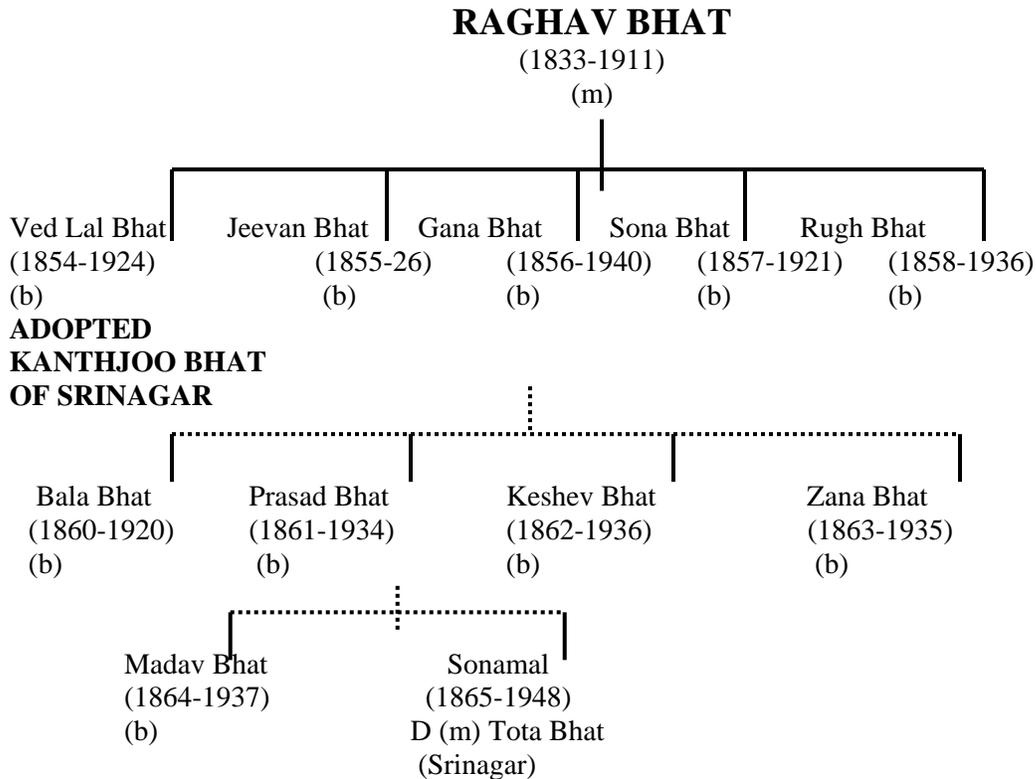
S.No	Village	Hectares	Population	House Holds
01	Androsa	083.37	0523	072
02	Bathon	551.19	0393	056
03	BrgH Anayatullah	018.22	0053	006
04	Chand Haro	487.65	1740	178
05	Chatdom	048.57	0731	094
06	Dolsu	286.93	0384	049
07	Drang Bal	380.07	0385	054
08	Gund Bal	039.25	0305	036
09	Khani Bal	351.67	1332	171
10	Krancho	201.54	0305	038
11	Khrew	2196.85	5411	811
12	Ladov	904.87	2820	369
13	Maij	230.68	0843	088
14	Mandekhpal	230.19	0537	071
15	Moni Pora	144.88	0497	050
16	Negander	167.95	0202	027
17	Olchi Bag	054.23	0369	044
18	Sata Pokhran	322.66	0505	007
19	Shrar Shali	655.60	2560	398
20	Sombora	499.79	2508	297
21	Wuyan	1156.27	2523	420
22	Zinetrang	187.38	0278	035

Source: Census of India 1981, Series-8, Parts XIII-A&B of District Pulwama

3.0 FAMILY BACKGROUND

Total area of village Ladov is 904.87 hectares and as per 1981 census total population of this village was 2820 souls comprising of 369 households. Kashmiri Pandit community comprises 24 percent of total population of the village and was having about 40 households. Pandit Raghav Bhat was one of the renowned members of Kashmiri Pandit community who was a permanent resident of this village. He owned vast tracts of agricultural land, orchards, saffron fields and big plots of land meant for growing vegetables in Ladov and in many adjoining villages. In Kashmir every field and tree has been named for identification and the names of fields owned by Bhat (Belov) family are *Charis Dhag, Butein Reith, Zurimon, Tangpat, Aawaran Chakul, Harakul, Kuhul, Rashi Raad, Baahvoth* etc. The names of walnut trees owned by this family are *Dhanmoon kul, Batuk kul, Patim kul, Woonth kul, Machilam kul* and *Badam kul*. For centuries agriculture was the main source of their income. At their will and choice they produced everything by growing grains, vegetables, plants, trees, saffron etc. This family had plenty of food and other amenities of life at their command and thus happiness and prosperity never evaded from them.

The members of this Bhat family of village Ladov were the enlightened members of the community. Pandit Raghav Bhat had eleven issues (ten sons and one daughter). All the ten brothers were bachelors and the youngest sister Sonamal was married to Pandit Tota Bhat of Srinagar. The detail of eleven issues of Sh. Raghav Bhat of village Ladov is as under:



Since all the sons of Pandit Raghav Bhat were bachelors, his eldest son adopted Pandit Kanth Joo Bhat of Sheshyar, Srinagar. All the brothers lived a sainthood life and nobody was

concerned about the day-to-day work to run the establishment. It is said that one day an elderly person of the village spotted a cow belonging to Pandit Raghav Bhat in a nearby pasture. From that day every member of the village would quote a Kashmiri verse in this regard which is read as follows:

*“Raghavas kaah goober
Ti gaav naber”*

Pandit Ved Lal Bhat who adopted Pandit Kanth Joo Bhat was having a robust body and was called by the villagers as *Ved Shadada*.

Pandit Ved Lal Bhat was having an art to climb any tree of any height. Once while plucking the walnuts in Kashmiri *Dhoon Chanin* he looked at the tree after climbing down and saw that two walnuts are still one the tree. He again climbed the tree to pluck these walnuts and fell down and died.

As already said all the brothers were having inclination towards the sainthood and in this connection they often used to go to nearby *Vasturvan* for meditation. Pandit Madav Bhat (1864-1937) once went to *Vasturvan* and was lifted by the fairies (*Pariyan*). Pandit Zana Bhat (1863-1935) went for his search in the deep forests and never returned back.

Pandit Nand Lal Bhat elder brother of Pandit Kanth Joo Bhat was working as jailor in a local jail at Srinagar. Once he set free a thief of his own and was discharged from service by the then Maharaja of Kashmir. After the death of his two wives at Srinagar he also came to village Ladov and settled down with his younger brother. He ran a shop at this village and later he winded up the shop after having a great loss by giving the commodities on credit to the villagers. Pandit Nand Lal Bhat was also having a robust body and was called Nand *Pahalwan* by the villagers. It is said that he used to carry gunny bag of 40 kg. single handedly.

Pandit Himmat Bhat grandfather of Pandit Nand Lal Bhat and Pandit Kanth Joo Bhat was a *hakeen* of repute at Srinagar and this trade was adopted by his son Pandit Tota Bhat, his grandson Pandit Nand Lal Bhat and nephew Pandit Shyam Lal Bhat. Even today one lane at Banamohalla, Srinagar is known *Shayam Batun Kocha*. Pandit Sahaz Kak Bhat (1862-1935) was born to Pandit zanardan Bhat, a hakim by profession, Pt. Sahaz Kak Bhat was last of the three children of his parents. He was four years old when he lost his father and was brought up by his elder brother Gana Kak Bhat, who held the important position of royal physician to the Maharaja of J&K state. He had initial schooling at C.M.S.School, Fetehkadal, but soon left the English language and by self-education method learnt not only Persian, Sanskrit and Arabic, but also Unani medicine and eventually became a physician like his elder brother.

4.0 PLACES OF NOTE

WUYAN:

Village about 5 km to the Northeast of Pampore. It was known as Ovana formerly. The first factory in Jammu and Kashmir for the manufacture of cement was installed at Wuyan because of the availability of raw material for the purpose. Ovana (Wuyan) was burnt during the civil war between the Kashmiris and the immigrant Syeds in 1484 A.D. The name of the village changed from Ovana (Uvana) to Vuyan and then to Wuyan.

At Wuyan there are sulphur springs. Near Khonamoh village on the mountain ridge there is a natural cave dedicated to Shiva called Harshishwar (literally means: Harsh = ecstasy and Ishwar = lord). The mouth of the cave is believed to close every year the length of a barley grain and a rock outside the cave growing so much bigger. There is a natural lingam inside the cave and a quartz vein on the ceiling, which drips water, is called Vasak Nag (the Lord of Serpents). Hindus visited it on New Moon and Full Moon.

ZEWAN:

National Highway No: 1A branches off this side of Pampore, towards Zewan. It was founded by Kalasha (1089-1101) who, despite his confrontation with his father Ananta and mishandling of his son Harsha, appears to have attained some reputation as a strong ruler. *Jayavana*, as the founder named it, may have commemorated Kalash's victory over his enemies of whom a ruler of his temperament could not have a few. Two persons close to him in his family bore the name Jaya. One was concubine Jayamati who joined six of Kalash's queens in committing self-immolation at his death. Whether she had persuaded the king to found the village in her name is not known. The second was his son Jayaraja from his favourite concubine Kayya. There is no clue to his association with Jayavan, now Zewan.

The pool of water at Zewan is mentioned as Taksakanaga in the account of King Nara. Two Taksakas are mentioned in the Nilmat Puran amongst leading Nagas. People bathe in the pool on the occasion of the solar eclipse.

This spur contains fossils identified by Mr. W.D. West of Geological Survey of India in the year 1902 are worth studying. Here is a spring dedicated to the serpent god Takshak from which it is believed the bulb of saffron came out. As per Ain-I-Akbari, 'the spring at Reyvun (Zewan) is considered holy. Saffron came out of the spring. When people commence planting saffron they first pour cow's milk in it, if it sinks it is a good omen, if it floats it is considered bad'.

KHREW:

An important festival is Jwalamukhi fair, which is held in village Khrew. The temple is situated on the top of a small hillock and is known as Jwalamukhi. The festival falls on or about 16th July and is celebrated by Kashmiri Pandits as well as Muslims. Muslim peasants for the sale of different kinds of commodities set up about 250 to 300 stalls. Hindu shopkeepers run confectionery shops and such other stalls in which earthen trays with ghee and cotton wick are available for sale. The devotees purchase earthen trays and burn cotton wicks while worshipping the deity.

SEMPOR:

Lalded was born in a Brahmin family. Some sources place her birthplace at Sempor, a small village near Ladov, but according to some others it was near Srinagar at Pasndrenthan, the ancient capital Puranadhisthana, four miles southeast of Srinagar. Early in the childhood she imbibed the values of piety and religion. She came early under the influence of Sidda Mol (venerable Siddha Shrikantha) and was initiated into spiritual disciplines. There is a unanimous agreement that she was married into a Brahmin family of Pampore, the old Padamapora City founded in A.D. 812-849 by Padma, the Minister of King Ajatapida; and that here a proverbially harsh treatment was meted out to her which she suffered with equanimity and without complaint. She did not give birth to a child nor lay in confinement. During the forties her fame spread far and wide and crowds of visitors came to have her *darshan*. Decided on leaving her husband's home Lalded resolved to lead an ascetic life. She paid little regard to her personal appearance, decorum of dress or Brahmin respectability. Legend has woven miracles into this event, but confirmation of it is available in her *vaakh*.

One and only word my guru gave me:
From without withdraw your gaze within:
I, Lalla, took to heart this world. It clicked,
And thus I roamed naked wherever I pleased.

This verse has made the devout give a somewhat fanciful account of how the lower part of her belly (*lal* in Kashmiri) increased its flabbiness and size to hang loose and cover her pubic region. This is also used to explain how she came to be known as Lal or Lalla or Lal Ded (Granny Lal). It seems, however, that Lalla, her maiden name, was a common name in Kashmir (vide, Rajatarangini VI.74).

5.0 FAMOUS PERSONALITIES OF VILLAGE LADOV AND ITS ADJOINING VILLAGES

HABBA KHATOON:

Habba Khatoon.....the queen of last independent ruler of Kashmir, Sultan Yousuf Shah Chak, occupies a similar status in the history of Kashmiri literature. She was a poetess and musician who introduced "Vatun" form of poetry in Kashmiri Language.

Habba Khatoon was born in 16th century A.D. to one Abdullah Rather of Chandhara near Pampore and was named Zoon. Got married to a farmer namely Aziz. After her marriage she continued to practice music and poetry which was disliked by her husband. Zoon refused to give up her vocations, which created misunderstanding between the couple. Her in-laws inflicted unbearable miseries on her. One day passed when Sultan Yousuf noticed her in the field and decided to marry her. After her marriage with the Sultan was performed she was rechristened as Habba Khatoon. This was another phase of Zoon's life, which passed off peacefully. It however proved short-lived when the Mughals invaded Kashmir they mancoured to have to have the Sultan arrested. Kashmir was annexed with the Mughal Empire. Yousuf was imprisoned and taken to some unknown destination. History records that Habba Khatoon could not bear this shock and lost her mental poise which ultimately caused her death. She lies buried at *Athwajan* in Srinagar. However a parallel version available in this respect says that after the arrest of Sultan Habba Khatoon left Kashmir in his search and traced him out in Bihar where both of them breathed their last and were buried at *Biswak* in Bihar state of India.

LAL DED:

The great woman saint of Kashmir, Lal Ded was born in 1335 A.D. in Sempor a small village near Pampore. Legend has it that her mother-in-law who nearly starved her treated her cruelly. Of this the story goes that Lal Ded had always a stone in her platter covered with a then layer of rice so that it could look like a big heap. Lal Ded never uttered a word against her ill treatment. Later on Lal relinquished her married life and became a wandering mystic. She used to wander in rags in half nude attire. Lal Ded used to out-pour her soul in rhythmic notes, which formed the first poetic composition of Kashmiri poetry called "Vakh". Grierson first edited these Vakhs. They reveal the spiritual experiences of Lal Ded. She was taught her doctrine of mysticism by means of verse.

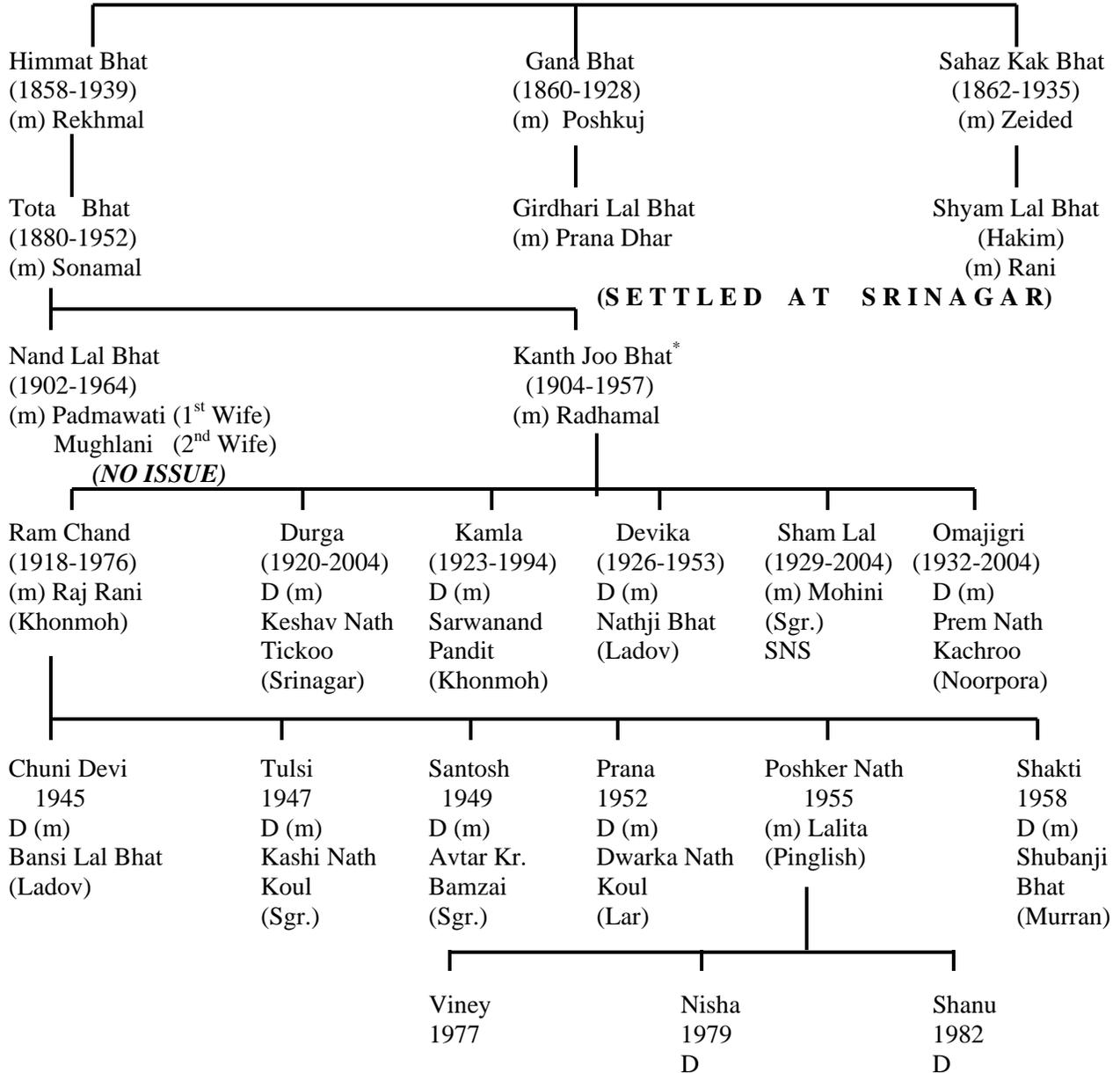
WAHAB KHAR:

Wahab Khar was born in 19th century at Shaar, Khrew. A blacksmith by profession he was also a sufi saint. Wahab Khar has projected "mysticism" in his poetry. Being an illiterate his poetry presents some literary errors. However, his "*Sheikh Sana*", "*Mash Tular*" and "*Mehraj Nama*" are considered his best poetic creations. Whab Khar passed away in 1912.

6.0 GENEALOGICAL TREE

ZANARDAN BHAT

(BELOV)
(1835-1912)
(m) Wannamal



*Shri Kanth Bhat was resident of Srinagar and was adopted by Sh. Ved Lal Bhat of village Ladov in the year 1904.

Abb. SNS: See Next Sheet.
D: Daughter

Gotra: **Svamina Bharadvaja**
Isht Devi: Ragianya Devi, Tulmul

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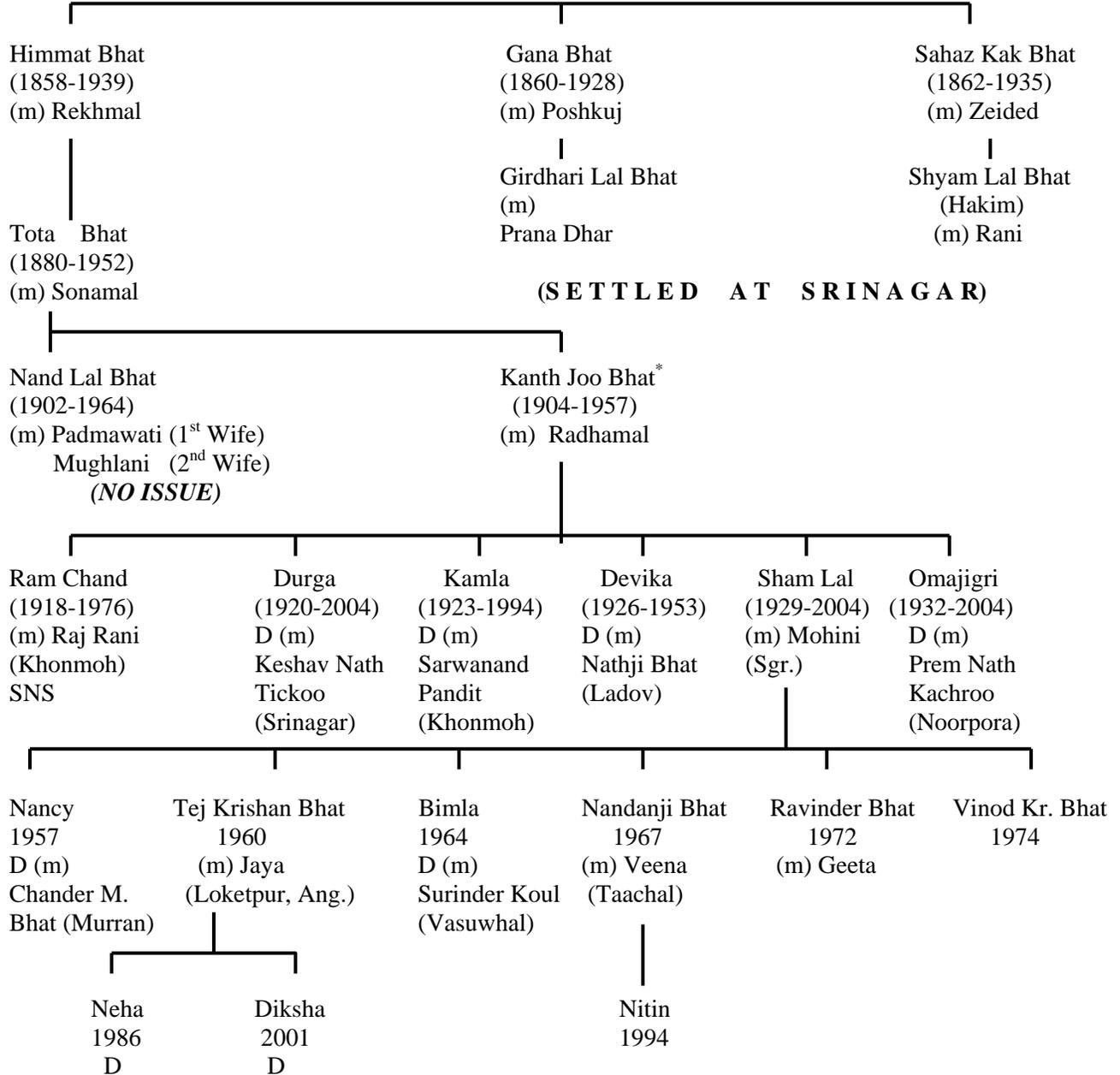
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Abb. SNS: See next sheet.

D: Daughter

(m): Married to

Gotra: **Svamina Bharadvaja**

Isht Devi: Ragianya Devi, Tulmul

7.0 SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF PANDIT SHYAM LAL BHAT (BELOV)

(07.10.1929-11.01.2004)

Pandit Shyam Lal Bhat, last but one youngest of six children of Pandit Kanth Joo Bhat and Radhamal, was born on Monday, the 5th *Aasud (Shoklupakh)* 1986 (Bikrami), corresponding to October 07, 1929 A.D. at village Ladov in one of the most highly esteemed Bhat (Belov) families of Kashmiri Pandit community.

Pandit Shyam Lal Bhat was born at his ancestral house at village Ladov, in a room on the ground floor. Though over 80 years have elapsed since the building was constructed, it is in good condition even today. He had passed the 6th standard Examination. The 6th standard of those days, it is said, was equivalent to the Matriculation standard of these days. Since his earliest boyhood, he had shown great interest in memorizing Kashmiri Bhajans and Sanskrit verses and would recite from memory some beautiful Bhajans even upto his passing away.

Pandit Shyam Lal's ancestors originally hailed from Bana Mohalla, Srinagar. Later on they moved to village Ladov, a small village about seven kilometres to the North East of the town of Pampore. It was actually in the year 1904 when Pandit Kanth Joo Bhat father of Shri Shyam Lal Bhat moved from Srinagar and was adopted by Pandit Ved Lal (Belov) Bhat of village Ladov. His father and mother expired when he was in his teens and was later brought up by his elder brother Pandit Ram Chand Bhat. He was appointed in army depot at Khonmoh and after serving there for six months he left the job. In the meantime both the brothers purchased a bus and Pandit Shyam Lal was entrusted the work to look after the bus and accompany the driver for keeping a watch over the income earned from the passengers. In those days there was scarcity of money and nobody was willing to travel by bus. All the passengers prefer to travel on foot and as such the bus did not get much income and was later sold out causing a great loss to them.

His elder brother Pandit Ram Chand Bhat got married Pandit Sham Lal Bhat in 1946 to Mohini of Srinagar. Mohini, a simple, homely girl, dutiful and affectionate, gave him not only stability of life but also passive support in his day-to-day work. It was at this time the partition of the family occurred and both the brothers lived separately in the same house. After separation, he turned to business of dry fruits and saffron. The area of Pampore is famous for saffron and fruits. The family was having vast tracts of fields of saffron, fruits and paddy. For about five years he was doing his own business and later he turned to farming and looked after his fields and orchards. In the year 1982 he constructed a beautiful house adjacent to his old house.

Pandit Shyam Lal Bhat was a simple person and had a pleasing personality. He was of short stature and handsome and generally wore *achkan*. He had deep, sparkling eyes and was gentle to a fault. He possessed a great sense of humour. He was also fond of smoking but in later years he left smoking due to his ill health.

His had his first issue after about 10 years of his marriage. He had four sons and two daughters.

After migration his elder son Shri Tej Krishan Bhat constructed a house at Lower Roop Nagar behind Uma Devi Mandir on the persuasion of his father. Pandit Shyam Lal Bhat usually used to sit on a wooden bed placed on the varendah at Roop Nagar overlooking the temple of Uma Devi deeply absorbed in the Supreme.

In 1997 he had an attack of brain hemorrhage and came out of it. In January 2004 his health suddenly deteriorated and was in constant supervision of renowned doctors available at Jammu. On 7th January 2004, doctors advised to put him on oxygen for half an hour and after general check up at Govt. Medical College Hospital, Jammu was shifted to his house. On the same day he was taken to Dr. Sapru's clinic at Sarwal at 8.30 p.m. On 8th January 2004 while having a nap at about 5 p.m. he had a dream. He disclosed the dream to his family members with moist eyes. In the dream he saw his parents and elder brother who gave him directions to come to them as they have already booked a place adjacent to theirs in the Heavens. He further disclosed that he had requested his parents and brother to give him only three days. All the members of the family were panic stricken. On 9th January 2004 he was taken to Dr. Shadi Lal Kachroo and Dr. Sapru for check up and on his way back he contacted his two sons residing at N.Delhi and his daughter at Udhampur and talked to them. He was so weak that the telephone instrument was brought into the car from the PCO at Janipur from where he talked to his dear ones. On 10th January 2004 (Saturday) he was shifted to Govt. Medical College Hospital, Jammu and was put on oxygen for about half an hour. He suddenly took off his Oxygen mask and told his elder son to take him home. He was suffering from COAD and was having blood pressure reading of 170/100. He was given 2 ml. of Laxis injection and an antibiotic Ofromox for infection of Lungs in the Hospital. Sh. Pushker Nath Bhat his nephew and niece Smt. Shakti Bhat also visited the hospital on that very moment after hearing of his illness. He totally refused to stay in the hospital any longer and compelled his son to take him home. After reaching the home at 5.30 p.m. he himself came out of the car and walked to his room. He hugged his eldest daughter after alighting from the car, who had come from Udhampur and wept. At about 7 p.m. he took some bread (*Kulcha*) dipped in *Kahiwa*. He took it hurriedly. He talked to his family members upto 11 p.m. and went to the bed.

On 4th *Maag 2060 Krishnapakh* (Bikramni), an auspicious day of *Sankat Chourthi*, corresponding to 11th January 2004 (Sunday) at about 5.30 a.m. in the wee hours he breaths his last with the name of "Lord Rama" on his lips.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Chander M. Bhat

Born on 20th March, 1960 in Murran a village in North Kashmir, Chander M. Bhat is presently working as an Assistant Supdt. Posts, in Department of Posts, Govt. of India. His articles regarding Posts and of non-political nature stand widely published in various papers and magazines of the country. A booklet "How to Collect Stamps" published by the Department of Posts, has earned him genuine accolades. He worked on the project of tracing the roots of his co-villagers and of the village Murran, resulting into the culmination of a widely acclaimed book "Murran ...My Village. Man with depth, Chander M. Bhat has also another book, "Ocean by Drops" (collection of poems) in his vase having colorful poems. His book "Ancient History of Jammu and Kashmir", confirms his researching capability. Various research papers like "The Splendor that is Amarnath" and "Vitasta...The Sacred River of Kashmir" are valuable additions to his works that has proved very fruitful and guiding force in the exile period of Kashmiri Pandits community of which the author is also a member.

Presently the author is working on "OOL...THE NEST" - a six volume project [each volume of about 2500 pages] on all the 595 Kashmiri Pandit villages of Kashmir.

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