



Ambedkar Times

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Babasaheb Dr Ambedkar's Contributions for Labourers in India

Prem K. Chumber
Editor-In-Chief:

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Bharat Ratan Bodhi Satav Babasaheb Dr Bhimrao Ramji's contribution towards the emancipation and empowerment of the working class in India both during the freedom struggle as well as after India's independence is worth remembering on the historic May Day: celebrated worldwide as International Workers' Day, also known as Workers' Day and Labour Day. It was chosen to be International Workers' Day at the International's second congress in 1891 to commemorate the 1886 Haymarket affair in Chicago wherein on 1 May workers of various industrial units observed general strike for the eight-hour workday. On 4 May when the Chicago police tried to disperse a public assembly in support of the general strike an unidentified person threw a bomb, which led to police firing resulting in the death of seven police officers, at least four civilians and wounding of sixty police officers and unknown number of civilians. This was led to the arrest of hundreds of labour leaders and their sympathers. Later on, four of the arrested ones were executed by hanging.

It was coincidence that Babasaheb Dr Ambedkar was born in 1891 and came to acquire higher education in the United States of America in 1913. What he learnt during his three years (1913-16) stint at Columbia University in New York City in the class room sessions of his great professors - John Dewey, James Shotwell, Edwin Seligman and James Harvey Robinson - made him struggle for the emancipation and empowerment the labourers on his return in his own country during the British as well as after India's independence. During his tenure as a Labour Minister and as the Labour Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council between 1942 and 1946, he worked hard for the reduction of working hours from 12 to 8 Hrs a day. His contributions towards granting the rights of the labourers are manifold: establishment of Employment Exchange, Employees State Insurance (ESI), Indian Statistical Law, Compulsory Recognition for Trade of Union, Indian Factory act, Dearness Allowance (DA), Paid Holidays, Health Insurance, Extra pay for Overtime, Legal Strike Act, Provident Fund (PF), Labour Welfare Fund, Technical Training Scheme, Mines Maternity Benefit Act, Women Labour Welfare Fund, Women and Child-Labour Protection Act, Maternity Benefit for Women Labour, Equal Pay for Equal Work irrespective of the Sex, Restoration of Ban on Employment of Women on Underground Work in Coal Mines.

As far as the public domain of working class activism is concerned, Dr Ambedkar was always acted as front soldier for the rights of workers. His contribution in highlighting the plight of Dalit workers access in the highest paid textile mill weaving departments is well known. Dalits were not allowed to work in these textile mills for the fear of pollution caused by their saliva to wet the thread during the weaving process to tie the knot, each time the weft bobbin required a replacement. Dr Ambedkar brought this issue in the public during the famous 1928 Bombay Textile Strike. He threatened to dissuade Dalit workers from joining the strike if his demand for Dalits' access to all kind of jobs in the mills was accepted. His contributions towards the bill to abolish the Mahar Watan and Khoti abolition bill were among the several prominent labour welfare measures undertaken by him. Abolition of Punjab Land Alienation Act of 1900 was yet another legal relief to the non-agriculture classes, including Dalits, to overcome their exclusion from the land ownership rights.

Ambedkar Times & Desh Doaba Weekly newspapers congratulate all on the May Day Celebrations the world over and also fondly remember the rich contributions made by Bodhi Satav Bharat Ratan Babasaheb Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar towards the emancipation and empowerment of workers in India!

THE UNIFORM CIVIL CODE AND THE CONSTITUTION

In his 11th successive Independence Day address to the nation from the ramparts of the Red Fort on 15th August 2024, Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi gave a renewed push to his Party's ideological agenda of a Uniform Civil Code, reframing the idea as "Secular Civil Code". The Uniform Civil Code has been a part of the BJP's agenda since its Jan Sangh days though formally included in its election manifesto in 1989. The Prime Minister announced in unequivocal terms that the citizens have been governed by a "Communal Civil Code" for seventy five years, and it was need of time to have a "Secular Civil Code" to eliminate religious divide and discrimination. He declared that the laws which divide the country on communal lines and become a reason for inequality can have no place in a modern society. Referring to the Supreme Court's many pronouncements and constitutional provisions, he asserted that the introduction of the Secular Code was necessary to eliminate discrimination based on religion and bring the people closer. His announcement has stirred up a hornets' nest of angry opposition and strong criticism.

Most of the opposition parties and critics have strongly criticized the Prime Minister's announcement dismissing it as a mere political plank or stunt to polarize the electorates, and to divert attention from the burning public issues such as inflation, unemployment, hate crimes, discrimination and corruption etc. Congress spokesperson Mr. Jairam Ramesh wrote on X: "The non-biological PM's capacity for malice, mischief, and maligning of history knows no bounds. To say that we have had a "Communal Civil Code" till now is a gross insult to Dr. Ambedkar, who was the greatest champion of reforms in Hindu personal laws that became a reality by the mid-1950s. The reforms had been bitterly opposed by the RSS and the then Jana Sangha." He also quoted a 21st Law Commission's report dated August 31, 2018, which says the Uniform Civil Code is neither necessary nor desirable at this stage.

Underlining the Law Commission's assertion ibid the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIM-PLB) denounced Prime Minister's statement as a well thought out conspiracy with grave ramifications. It declared that any attempt to bring Uniform Civil Code would be unacceptable to the Muslims and they would never compromise with their Personal Law. It was pointed out that the Directive Principles could not supersede the fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution. The Communist Party of India, RJD, CPI (M) and some other critics also vehemently criticized the Prime Minister's announcement as election stunt and diversionary tactics in view of the forthcoming Assembly elections in some States.

The article 44 relating to Uniform Civil Code was introduced as article 35 of the Draft Constitution in the Constituent Assembly by Dr. Ambedkar on November 23, 1948 as part of the "Directive Principles of State Policy" (Article 36 to 51) in Part IV of

the Constitution. The article says: "The State shall endeavor to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India". As per article 37 the provisions contained in this Part shall not be enforceable by any court, but the principles therein laid down are nevertheless fundamental in the governance of the country and it shall be the duty of the State to apply these principles in making laws.

A day long debate ensued on this article with Mr. Mohammad Ismail Sahib moving an amendment seeking addition of a proviso to article 35, saying: "Provided that any group, section or community of



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people shall not be obliged to give up its own personal law in case it has such a law". Explaining the reasons for amendment he said if anything was done affecting the personal laws, it would tantamount to interference with the way of life of those people who had been observing these laws for generations

and ages. Another amendment to the article was moved by Mr. Naziruddin Ahmad seeking addition of another proviso, namely: "Provided that the personal law of any community which has been guaranteed by the statute shall not be changed except with the previous approval of the community". His apprehension was that the article perhaps clashed with article 19 of the Draft Constitution which provided for freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practice and propagate religion. He further said that the religious laws relating to particular communities should not be affected except with their consent. Mahboob Ali Baig Sahib Bahadur also moved a similar amendment. Many members expressed their views for and against the amendments during the debate.¹

Opposing the amendments, Dr. Ambedkar said: "We have in this country a uniform code of laws covering almost every aspect of human relationship. We have a uniform and complete Criminal Code operating throughout the country, which is contained in the Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code. We have the Law of Transfer of Property, Negotiable Instruments Acts and innumerable enactments which would prove that this country has practically a Civil Code covering almost every aspect of human relationship, uniform in its content and applicable to the whole of the country. The only province the Civil Law has not been able to invade so far is Marriage and Succession. It is the intention of those who desire to have article 35 as part of the Constitution to bring about that change. Therefore, the argument whether we should attempt such a thing seems to me somewhat misplaced, as a matter of fact, we have covered the whole lot of the field which is covered by a uniform Civil Code in this country". He further observed that the Muslim Law was not

(Contd. on next page)



THE UNIFORM CIVIL CODE AND THE CONSTITUTION

(Continue from page 1)

immutable as claimed by the movers of the amendments as the North-West Frontier Province followed the Hindu Law in the matter of succession and in other matters up to 1935. That apart, the Muslims to a large extent were governed by the Hindu Law in the matter of succession in various parts of India such as the United Provinces, the Central Provinces and Bombay up till 1937. In North Malabar the matriarchal Marumakathayam Law applied to both Hindus and Muslims. He further clarified: "Article 35 merely proposes that the State shall endeavor to secure a civil code for the citizens of the country. It does not say that after the Code is framed the State shall enforce it upon all citizens merely because they are citizens. It is perfectly possible that the future Parliament may make a provision by way of making a beginning that the Code shall apply only to those who make a declaration that they are prepared to be bound by it, so that in the initial stage the application of the Code may be purely voluntary as was done in the Shariat Act of 1937". The amendments were, therefore rejected and the article 35 added to the Constitution.²

Replying to the question of saving personal law that came up during debate on article 13 on December 2, 1948, Dr. Ambedkar further explained that if such a saving clause was introduced into the Constitution, it would disable the legislatures in India from enacting any social measure whatsoever. He said, "The religious conceptions in this country are so vast that they cover every aspect of life, from birth to death. If personal law is to be saved, I am sure that in social matters we will come to a standstill. We ought to strive hereafter to limit the definition of religion in such a manner that we shall not extend beyond beliefs and such rituals as may be connected with ceremonials which are essentially religious. It is not necessary that the laws relating to tenancy or succession should be governed by religion. We are having this liberty in order to reform our social system, which is so full of inequities, discriminations and other things, which conflict with our fundamental rights. I would also like to point out that there is no obligation upon the State to do away with personal laws. It is only giving a power. Therefore, no one need be apprehensive of the fact that if the State has the power, the State will immediately proceed to execute or enforce that power in a manner that may be found to be objectionable

by the Muslims or by the Christians or by any other community in India. No Government can exercise its power in such a manner as to provoke the Muslim community to rise in rebellion. I think it would be a mad Government if it did so. But that is a matter which relates to the exercise of the power and not to the power itself."³

Addressing the Constituent Assembly on the Directive Principles of the State Policy, he said: "The Directive Principles have a great value, for they lay down the economic and social ideal before those who would be forming the Government. We do not want merely to lay down a mechanism to enable people to come and capture power. While we have established political democracy, the Constitution also wishes to lay down the ideal of economic democracy. It is the intention of this Assembly that in future both the legislature and the executive should not merely pay lip service to these principles, but that they should be made the basis of all executive and legislative action that may be taken hereafter in the matter of the governance of the country⁴.

The Directive Principles of State Policy contain provisions more vital and urgent than the Uniform Civil Code to achieve the objectives of the Constitution particularly the social, economic and political justice, and human dignity. Article 38 lays down that the State shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting a social order of social, economic and political justice. It shall, in particular, strive to minimize the inequalities in income, and endeavor to eliminate inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities. It is observed that despite these provisions a vast majority of people continue to suffer from the socio-economic and political disparities, inequities and injustice. The rich and poor divide is rather widening to alarming proportion even after seventy four years of the Constitution being in operation.

As per article 39 the State shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing right to an adequate means of livelihood to all the citizens; distribution of ownership and control of the material resources of the community as best to subserve the common good; the operation of the economic system not to result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment; non-abuse of the health and strength of workers and the tender age of children; and protection of childhood

and youth of the children against exploitation and their moral and material abandonment. Article 41 provides for effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, and in other cases of undeserved want. The ground reality on this account too is less said the better. Free distribution of five kilos of food grain to eighty percent of the population summarizes in a nut shell the practical economic condition of the vast people and the action and intention of the ruling dispensations in execution of the principles. The concentration of national wealth and control of means of production in few hands, continued dismal state of unemployment, illiteracy and poor conditions of the workers and children speak volumes of utter lack of focus of Governments on these vital areas of human and national development.

Further the State is required to promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections, particularly the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and to protect them from social injustice as per article 46. These sections form a major part of the backward, poor, illiterate and unemployed population. Social, economic and political inequality, discrimination, deprivation and exploitation continue to haunt them. Crimes against them are on the increase and they continue to reel under injustice. The ruling dispensations have been tardy in the implementation of not only the directive principles but also the fundamental rights. There is wide spread discontent among these sections and the cup of their patience appears to be nearing its brim. This reminds one of the words of caution contained in the speech delivered by father of the Constitution on the occasion of presenting the final Draft Constitution to the Constituent Assembly on 25th November 1949: "These down-trodden classes are tired of being governed; they are impatient to govern themselves. This urge for self-realization in them must not be allowed to develop into a class struggle or class war. It would lead to a division of the House. That would indeed be a day of disaster. Therefore the sooner room is made for the realization of their aspiration, the better for the few, the better for the country, the better for the maintenance for its independence and the better for the continuance of its democratic structure. This can only be done by the establishment of

equality and fraternity in all spheres of life.⁵

Given the present socio-economic conditions of the vast population, unrest prevailing among them, apprehensions of the minorities particularly the Muslims, and the ideals of the Constitution, preference of the Prime Minister for a Uniform (Secular) Civil Code appears to be misplaced. The views of the critics that the statement of the Prime Minister has apparent political overtones in view of the forthcoming Assembly elections in some states may not be far from truth. It is time for the Government not only to remember but to honor in letter and spirit the words of wisdom of Dr. Ambedkar, who further cautioned in his speech *ibid*: "On the 26th of January 1950, we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality. In Politics we will be recognizing the principle of one man one vote and one vote one value. In our social and economic life, we shall, by reason of our social and economic structure, continue to deny the principle of one man one value. If we continue to deny equality in our social and economic life for long, we will do so only by putting our political democracy in peril. We must remove this contradiction at the earliest possible moment or else those who suffer from inequality will blow up the structure of political democracy which this Assembly has so laboriously built up".⁶

Can there be a better and timely advice and caution to the ruling dispensations than to recall and act on the pearls of wisdom of the constitutional wizards, dispassionate minds, true patriots and father of the Constitution in realizing the ideals of the Constitution before it is too late? Should they not focus on the burning issues and grey areas and put in heart and soul in establishing equality and fraternity in all spheres of life instead of continuing to take the people for a ride? The people are awake now. They are closely watching and getting restive.

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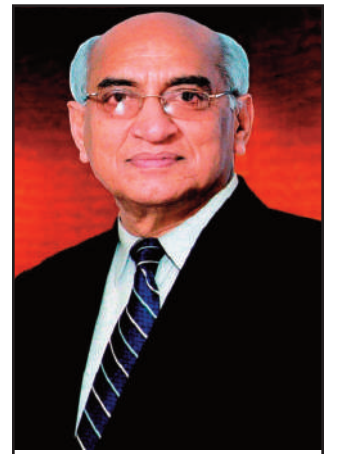
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UNTOLD STORY OF LUTYENS' DELHI

A Journey to the Modern Incarnation of the City Through the Generations



Ambesdor V.B. Soni

Dedication and acknowledgement

When you are young, the elders try to tell their stories and history but it doesn't interest you. You don't have time, as you have other things in mind. It's only when they are gone, that you wish you had listened and written down their experiences and pearls of wisdom. By then it's too late. This book is dedicated to the memory of my grandfather Nanig Ram, whose important contribution to construction of the capital city of New Delhi, would have gone unrecorded and untold for posterity, but for this effort. It was his son Bankey Lal, who weaved fascinating details connected with his father's contribution and career graph in my growing up years, that led me to delve deeper into his story.

I was not destined to have been born when my grandfather was alive. Dadi Indra Kaur, and Amma Kishan Devi filled me in with additional details of his versatile personality and the aura around him. Vimal Chandra, my phupha ji and mausi Shakuntala, provided additional riveting details of the paternal and maternal sides respectively, of the family history, including crucial dates, as did Ratan Devi tai. They provided the vital missing links and the timeline, to make the narrative cohesive and credible. I am grateful to them.

A word of appreciation is due to my two children. Daughter Medha, designed the cover of this book, with experience as a graduate in Communications from Emerson College, Boston. She helped me in many ways, in putting together the contents of the book, its formatting, placement of photos etc. As I am not digitally savvy, she was my in-house expert, available 24x7 to smoothen any snag, that came my way.

My computer professional son Manish in Boston, introduced me to the world of computer application in the 1990s. He was patient and helped tide over my initial phobia and mental block of the digital world. The manuscript of this book, typed and composed by me, would not have been possible without his initiative and perseverance. The idea of the title of the book was also conceived by him. My wife Kamlesh stood by and encouraged me to keep going when I lacked motivation. She was the first one to have read the draft of the book.

My thanks to all those who encouraged and provided me with the inspiration to write the narrative, to make it interesting and worth recording for posterity. Regrettably I cannot list them individually.

Deeply felt gratitude to them.

The book traces the background of the decision to shift the capital to New Delhi, how it was conceived, designed and built at the beginning of the 20th century. Stonemason Nanig Ram's contribution to the construction of various landmark structures has been described.

Coming up of age of Nanig Ram's successors is the next transition captured. The first-hand account of living through communal riots in New Delhi after 1947 partition has been poignantly brought out. Interesting account of the daily life of the family, through the evolving socio-cultural practices in 1950s and 1960s in Delhi follow next.

Imperial Cinema's journey from silent era films to giant screen, ending with curtain down, depicts the transition of the institution at various stages in the life of Delhi's social calendar. Story of emergence of Baba Sahab De. B.R. Ambedkar as champion of social justice is recounted. His role in mentoring Bankey Lal to important public positions is brought out.

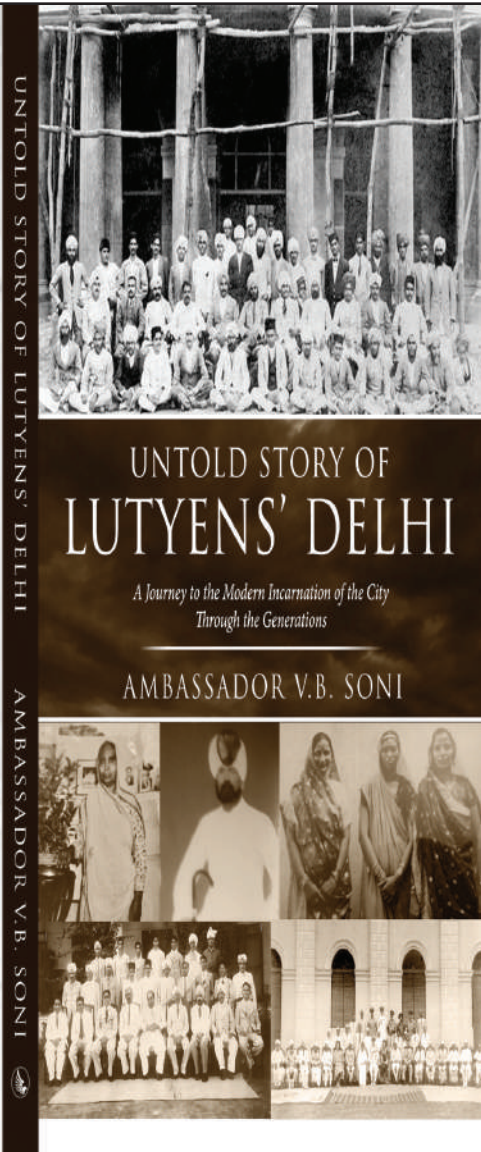
Pen portrait of four primary characters of the family, who made meaningful impact, follows in fascinating details. Two towering ladies, who shaped lives of the author's generation find their rightful place next- Dadi and Amma.

Two fictional pieces bring down the curtain on this chronicle in the 'Twilight zone'.

Ambassador V. B. Soni, apart from Delhi and Allahabad Universities, went to Balliol College. While at University of Oxford, he earned distinction in International Politics. He is a seasoned diplomat, with a distinguished career spanning 35 years. He served in various capacities in Indian diplomatic missions in Moscow, Cairo, Kuala Lumpur and London (1967 to 1983). He was Consul-General of India in Sydney (Australia), Ambassador of India to Senegal, High Commissioner of India to Jamaica and Fiji (1986-1997). He wound up his diplomatic career as Ambassador of India to Ukraine (1997-2002). He has represented India and often headed official Indian delegations to many international conferences.

On retirement from Government of India, Ambassador Soni joined the corporate sector, becoming Chairman of Overseas Infrastructure Alliance (India) Ltd. (2005-2015). He was responsible for the company's multimillion dollar turn over.

In electronic and print media Ambassador Soni is a frequent and popular invitee for his candid and eloquent views on topics of international significance. He is associated with leading think tanks like Indian Council of World Affairs, Indian Defence Studies and Analyses, and India International Centre. He is often invited to deliver lectures on wide varied subjects and preside over international seminars abroad and in India. He also frequently contributes articles and chapters to prestigious periodicals/journals and books.



PROLOGUE

History of the construction of New Delhi, at the beginning of twentieth century, should record on its golden pages, the contribution of a talented master craftsman, who infused soul into stones, the melody of which reverberates over the Raisina Hills, till today. Nanig Ram was a genius with a vision, who finds no place in the annals of New Delhi's construction of the newly built metropolis. There is a need to correct that unfair omission. This narrative, supported by photographic and documentary evidence, seeks to address that drawback.

Authoritative, formal and definitive studies on the coming up of New Delhi exist aplenty. An alternative approach to take the route of oral history would give human touch to the narrative. Oral histories are memories, family stories and traditions that are often left undocumented. They offer interesting insights into people's lives from a microcosmic perspective. Usually, historians and scholars don't consider oral histories to be 'proper research.' These are disregarded as unsubstantiated anecdotes, lacking in verifiable evidence. But they make for great stories, that could bring people's life's experience of that era alive, for the succeeding generation.

The approach here is not to give the usual account of the dynasties, the rich, the mighty and the powerful, their rise and fall. The methodology used is instead, to concentrate on ordinary people and let the surviving witnesses or their successors, who lived through those momentous times, to ex-

press themselves informally, and not through structured interviews and formal sessions. With some cross checking and research work, fascinating details of the day-to-day developments of those times emerged. These came alive through their voices in an incredible manner, not visualized before.

This is my personal account, based on many sessions held with my father Bankey Lal, before he passed away in 1989. In our extended joint family, reunions were a regular fixture, at festivals and social occasions like marriages. The matriarch Indra Kaur's living quarter, was where the family converged at every conceivable opportunity. Rare gems of information came to knowledge, simply by sitting through in those sessions. These remained etched in memory or recorded in my diary entries. It's time to put these in words, as precisely as possible, in this family chronicle. Subsequently some more information/ clarifications from uncles and aunts were added, to make this narrative interesting and comprehensive.

Nanig Ram's eldest son Mohan Lal, was the custodian of official documents and family records. That was the era of hand written memos/notes. With the passage of time and passing away of that generation, these changed hands many times. There was also frequent shuttling between Delhi and the ancestral village. It seems that a box, containing original documents and priceless photographs of historic significance, was left behind for safe keeping, with the caretaker in the village. But when that

house was sold almost 50 years back, it went missing, resulting in loss of the treasure trove. Thankfully the surviving documents included in the write-up are in our possession.

After almost 100 years, most of the records are in a fragile condition, fading or have become too brittle to handle. These have been scanned for posterity. Ownership documents of properties at Hanuman Road and Imperial Cinema are in good condition, even after more than a century. Some of these are in Persian, the court language at the time. These were translated into Urdu/Hindi and English, through court readers, working as translators/scribes in District and Sessions court in Etah, U.P., where my brother-in-law, Vikramjit Singh, District Judge, helped organize the tedious task. He deserves a mention here. To get first-hand feel of the surroundings at the ancestral village, I went to Achnera twice in 2005, after a gap of 50 years (1954). These visits enabled me to reconnect with neighbours around our ancestral home. The aged successors of the bustee wallahs still remember and hold Nanig Ram in awe, recalling the tremendous help he had rendered to their own forefathers. Most successor families have settled down in New Delhi, maintaining only tenuous links with the village.

Over many extended sessions with those in the know, I gathered information, taking copious notes of the events, happenings and developments, as retold by them. These form the basis of my story.

UNTOLD STORY OF LUTYENS' DELHI

The Makrana Beginning

The decline of the Mughal rule in the 18th century resulted in the centre of activity of political ascendancy, which used to be concentrated around North India (Delhi), shifting elsewhere. The main competing colonial powers England, France and Portugal were locked in scramble for gaining a foothold in India. England had a head start, through presence in the East (Bengal Presidency), the Deccan (Madras Presidency) and the Western coast (Bombay Presidency). Calcutta was the main port strategically located, to look after its interests and colonies in South/South East Asia and beyond, especially the crown colonies of Australia, New Zealand, en route to the Pacific Ocean.

After Aurangzeb, the administration of the Mughal dynasty in north

The 1857 sepoys' revolt, not far from the region, had made life even more difficult, because of the political and social tensions and the atmosphere of distrust between the foreign occupying power and the local populace. That led to the British sovereign to take over direct control of administration from the East India Company in 1858. Its approach to handle its subject also underwent change. Rajputana's royal kingdoms, famous for their accumulated wealth and riches, apparent from their love for opulent display, to what had deteriorated to decadent lifestyle, now became vulnerable to the machinations of the newly enthroned colonial power. It went about extracting exploitative trading concessions. Gradually their interference in the local Maharajas' af-

Barnawal. He sold the surrounding areas to a rich landlord. The latter planned to construct a luxurious haveli for his living quarter and some other structures.

There being no experienced local builder, he was on lookout for qualified people from nearby areas, to give shape to his pet project. It was at such a juncture in the mid-1890s that Nanig Ram, barely out of his teenage years, was entrusted by his father to explore business possibilities in the surrounding areas. During his recce foray in Achnera, the zamindar's ambitious projects came to his notice. An exploratory discussion was held, dur-

his marriage. The daughter of a migrant from Kumher, Indra Kaur (born 1880), a pretty and accomplished girl, was found to be a perfect match for the young Nanig Ram and the marriage was solemnized in 1890s.

The lucky launch pad

For the initial settling down process, the responsibility fell on the young shoulders of Nanig Ram. He showed initiative and drive, by putting together his core team. As work of digging the ground for laying the foundation got under way, fortune smiled. A treasure trove of pots, laden with gold, jewelry and precious items was found buried underground. He turned the fortune over to the rightful owner. So pleased was the landlord with the honesty, that he not only gave a handsome cash packet as gift, but also offered land at nominal price. He made his construction plan more ambitious, extending its scope and cost. For a charitable cause, serais (inns) for transiting travelers were ordered and wells were dug up for drinking water.

Many resting places with platforms, having intricate stonework like chhatra(umbrella) shape on top, to provide shade and relief from scorching sun or rainwaters during the monsoon season were commissioned. He ordered some ornate temples to be built, to show his gratitude to the divine force. Life size marble statues of his favourite deities-Lakshmi-Narayan, Shiv-Parvati and the local revered figure of Dauji were ordered. Almost overnight, Nanig Ram earned recognition for his professionalism and exquisite quality of output.

Along the way, the young man never forgot his modest beginning, and the role the bustee wallahs played in his coming of age. He earned their respect and admiration. Indeed, he was made Mukhiya (Head) of the clan at a young age, after the passing away of his father. He kept in touch with his roots in Makrana, visiting it as often as he could. In the first decade of the 1900s, having established an eminent position, Nanig Ram made his own dwelling place and bought agricultural land in Achnera. His lifestyle and manners improved. He was a self-taught man. In the manner of Rajasthan tradition, he sported a full-grown beard, wearing a turban. This may have been a distinct social and cultural influence imbibed in Bharatpur area, from the neighbourhood Sikh kingdom, dating back to the times of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. That also explains how his wife Indra got to have 'Kaur' added to her name, which is normally done by the lady followers of the Sikh faith.

Nanig Ram's own leaning was towards the Arya Samaj movement, (Contd. on next page)



Ambesdor V.B. Soni



Route map from Makrana to Achnera

India started declining. Social tensions arose. Safety in the countryside and on the highways became a cause for concern. Dacoits and thugs were becoming daring in their attacks on the highway traffic, on the trunk routes. The corridor linking Delhi/Agra belt with Rajputana, saw depressed communities moving out, in search of jobs elsewhere. The artisan and builder class witnessed challenging times. Activities pertaining to construction of palaces, townships, forts, victory towers, monuments, mausoleums and memorials during the period, had come to a grinding halt.

Makrana is a mining town in Nagaur district, some 140 kms from Jaipur, in a remote south-western corner of Rajasthan. The marble extracted there can compete with the very best in the world. It requires no chemical reinforcement, which even the Italian marble does. Makrana marble's structure is such that it does not change or lose the polish of its texture easily. It was because of this unique quality that the architects and master craftsmen from Persia/Central Asia, commissioned by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan to build the Taj Mahal, chose it as the preferred material. It enabled this mausoleum to be counted among the most magnificent structures of the world.

The successors of the talented class of artisans, continued to nurture their special skills for generations. Nathuram flourished in the Makrana region. In all likelihood, he would have relocated there from elsewhere, in search of the material (marble) he worked on. In due course of time, he owned a few small marble mines himself. He had good bonding with a Muslim neighbour, which resulted in long-lasting relationship, carried on to next generation.

fairs started breaching the well-established norms of protocol.

Nathuram married Radha, who bore him three children. The eldest son Nanig Ram (born 1879) showed promise even at a young age, of his mettle and what he was capable of. He learnt finer points of craftsmanship from his father. In no time he added his entrepreneurial skills to it. The Muslim partner even named his son-Sheikh Nathu Haji. The two growing up boys struck a good personal bonding, continuing the business partnership.

In the 1890s a tragedy struck the region, in the form of deadly epidemic, following an endemic drought cycle, typical of the desert region. It spread at a lightning speed and within no time the population in the region started dwindling. Most of the survivors had no choice but to abandon the village. Nathu Ram and partner had to decide what to do with the well-established business infrastructure they had created. In order that their business did not close down, it was decided that one of them, Haji would stay back and Nathu Ram would move on to another location temporarily. The question was, in which direction?

To the west lay a large expanse of Thar Desert, which made it out of bounds. So Bharatpur and Agra to the east, were the two alternatives available for relocation. The former was ruled by the Jat Rajas, descendants of Suraj Mal.

Move to Achnera

Around that time a nondescript place, Achnera entered the scene. In size it was no bigger than a small hamlet, inhabited by two main bustees- Bajera and Nera, which combined to be known by its present name. A small rivulet nearby dried out, leaving behind small pokhars(ponds). The area once belonged to a Rajput Raja



Nanig Ram on right with his partner

ing which the young man impressed the patron and was awarded the contract.

On return to Makrana, the exuberant young lad duly reported the good news to his father. Logistics and other aspects about Achnera were considered. Situated 20 miles beyond Bharatpur, it is 30 miles short of Agra. Its strategic location turned out to be the main attraction, as by then the railway network, that the English had started building in the 1870s for better connectivity and movement of goods/materials and security forces, was in place. They made Achnera, the junction point station for movement of railway trains/wagons that were subsequently to start crisscrossing through the length and breadth of the region. For the artisan community transporting materials like the heavy marble and boulder stones from the mines of the area to their worksites farther away, was like a lifeline for their specialised craft.

The terms for construction in Achnera, were agreed upon. Shifting of the business and household was done in stages. Initially only the select team came to set up a temporary establishment. The foundation work started in the right earnest. Workers were brought in from surrounding areas. One batch came from Kumher, 25 miles north of Bharatpur. Stone cutting/ polishing and lower end of the job was entrusted to them, while sculpting and skilled job was assigned to the expert craftsmen from Makrana. Nathu Ram's family shifted near the construction site in Achnera. It was also the time for

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which gained popularity during Daya Nand Sarawati's ascendancy towards the close of the 19th century in north India. What attracted him to the philosophy was its emphasis on the traditional education system, bringing girls into the academic discipline. Arya Samaj's campaign against caste system and other social evils of the time, were features to have brought him closer to this line of thinking. He developed a cosmopolitan attitude, and others followed him.

Nanig Ram's family grew in size, at the turn of the 20th century. Eldest daughter Jamuni (born 1889), was followed by son Mohan Lal (b.1900), Sohan Lal (b. 1905) and Bankey Lal (b.1908). Youngest daughter Shanti was born after 15 years, in 1923. With the scale of construction operation increasing, eldest son Mohan Lal was brought in, as apprentice during his teenage years. He turned out to be a smart young man, learning quickly by experience. Nanig Ram had established his pre-eminent position in the surrounding area. Just then another epochal event, of far-reaching importance, was taking place in the British establishment in London, on the future set up in India.

A momentous decision to shift the colonial capital

The long reigning British monarch, Queen Victoria, who never visited India, had assumed the title of Empress of India in May 1876. A proclamation to that effect was read out by the then Viceroy Lord Lytton in 1877, significantly in Delhi, not the then capital Calcutta. When she passed away in 1901, the way was finally clear for the eternally waiting Crown Prince to ascend to the throne. Even though he did not last beyond 1910, Viceroy Curzon had held a Durbar in honour of his coronation, as King Edward VII, again in Delhi in 1903.

King George V, who followed next, was witness to the pomp and pageantry surrounding Victoria, as the Empress of India. It was the stuff of a fairy tale. He aspired to bask in the glory of the same aura. Around this time another issue, under consideration in Whitehall, was the desirability to shift the capital of India away from Calcutta. The question was to locate an alternative site, appropriate for the purpose. For various historical and logistical reasons and the fact that in the past, most of the grand powerful dynasties/kingdoms operated from the north, particularly the Mughals, the obvious choice fell on Delhi.

This move was bound to create ripples and opposition from the well-established big European businesses, vested interests and the local establishments, who had thriving businesses in Calcutta. With the passage of time, trading activities had become

linked to politics. The entry of the business community, both European and Indian, into the world of wealth, had led to competition, jealousies and greed. The jockeying for power and influence, was well and truly in place. So, the proposal was kept as a closely guarded secret, to avoid an alert and panic among this influential section.

For his proclamation as Emperor of India, a grand ceremony of Coronation Durbar for George V was planned on December 11, 1911 in Delhi. The purpose was to match the opulence and grandeur of the famed Mughal emperors of the past.

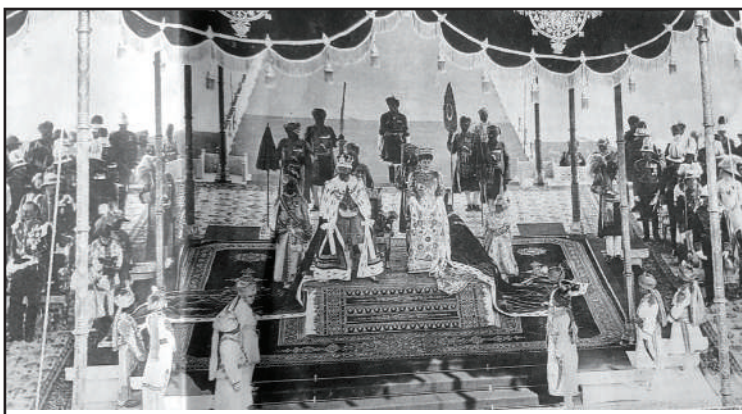


Community chaupal, adjoining ancestral house

The chosen location for the purpose, came to be known as Kingsway Camp, in the north of the old city of Shahjahanabad. At a spec-

river Jamuna, low lying and marshy nature of the soil, made it unsuitable for the magnificent metropolis that was to come up.

A rocky hillock, Raisina Hills, in south of the city, with the adjoining Malcha village, became the chosen site for the metropolis. Lutyens took over planning of the general outlay of the city, which included Viceroy's proposed Palace and the war memorial arch at the far end of the vista. To Baker's lot fell designing the two Secretariat buildings (North and South Blocks) and the legislative Chamber (parliament house). About the material to be used for the main buildings, the consensus for various reasons, was for red sandstone from Dholpur/Bharatpur



King George V Coronation Durbar Delhi, 11th December 1911

for the exterior and façade, and marble from Makrana, Ajmer and Alwar for the interior.

Dramatic circumstances leading to winning the contract

The Public Work Department

point of time. After digging up to some yards, the miners had to go to greater depth for further extraction. For this, the procedure involved blasting. This had to be done by drilling a hole in the rock, stuffing it with dynamite, using a heavy iron rod, igniting with a crude fuse manually.

Nanig Ram, through his team, carefully organized demonstration for blasting from various points at the site, from a safe distance. At one spot, to his horror, the fuse refused to ignite, threatening to abort the blasting procedure. He was furious with this loss of face, in front of an important client. Instead of skinning his junior responsible for the operation, he went down the mine himself, to check what had gone wrong. He disregarded the danger to his own person in the process.

As soon as he reached the spot and bent down to check the cause of the problem, the delayed spark reignited, perhaps from the blowing gush of wind, launching the iron rod holding the dynamite, like a missile. It blew straight into Nanig Ram's face. One of the splinters hit his left eye, damaging it permanently. For the rest of his life, he had to wear an artificial glass eye to cover the ugly scar resulting from it.

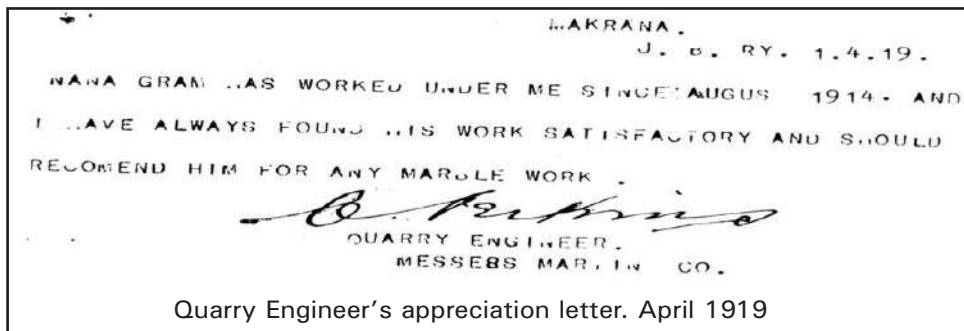
Quarry Engineer's appreciation letter. April 1919 This show of initiative, responsibility, courage, and personal commitment of the born leader impressed the quarry engineer and he recommended awarding the contract to him. He recorded his appreciation later on April 1, 1919 as follows: "Nanig Ram has worked under me since August 1914 and I always found his work satisfactory and would recommend him for any marble work". Here is a proof of how providence acknowledges and smiles on the brave hearts.

When reports of this saga reached Delhi, impressed with his dedication and leadership qualities, authorities additionally awarded Nanig Ram, the job of cutting, polishing of marble and red sandstone, putting gravel and other masonry work at the construction site. He did not stop at that. As his good reputation kept increasing, work pertaining to stone statues, lattice work, stone flower replicas and petals, chajjas etc. followed.

New Delhi visit opens up plethora of opportunities

In the event, the Delhi visit changed the course of life of Nanig Ram and his clansmen from Makrana/Achnera, forever. He brought his team, for whom temporary accommodation facilities were provided near the construction site. The stone yard was located at a place near Raisina Hill, behind where the Reserve Bank of India building stands today on Rafi Marg. The heavy stone and other materials from various points were

(Contd. on next page)



Quarry Engineer's appreciation letter. April 1919

tacular display of pomp and pageantry, King George V and Queen Mary were taken on a ceremonial procession to the tent city, specially put up to accommodate a large number of celebrity guests. Prominent Maharajas and noblemen turned up in their finest regalia and medals, traditional costumes, adorned with priceless ornaments, for the greatest show ever in India. There was lot of protocol, as the invited celebrities, paid their obeisance to the emperor, in order of their local standing, wealth and the size of their domain.

It was from the raised platform at the Durbar, that George V formally announced the decision to move the country's capital from Calcutta to Delhi. A new city had to be built for the purpose, for which he laid the foundation stone nearby. Two architects Edwin Lutyens and Herbert Baker, and a team of town planners from England, were commissioned to plan the city. After going around the location, the team concluded that that spot at Kingsway Camp was not ideal for the new capital. Its proximity to the

(PWD) put together an experienced team, under highly competent Chief Engineer and Superintending Engineers, as specialized department heads. Many local contractors had to be hired for work on the ground, to put together the infrastructure, raw materials, especially labour. Most of the material was not locally available and had to be brought in from the neighbouring areas in Rajasthan, U.P. (United Provinces), Punjab and Central India.

As the work of digging up foundation sites was going on, the mines from where marble and red sand stones had to be sourced, were identified. Teams headed by quarry/stone engineers were dispatched to the potential sites. The one that went to Makrana, scouting around for experienced and reliable miners, came across the name of Nanig Ram. He was asked to arrange mock demonstration to prove his technical expertise in extracting the material from the mines. The marble from these mines had to be extracted manually, in the absence of better advanced technology, at that

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transported through a specially laid narrow gauge rail track right up to this point. It is here that enormous sheds/workshops were erected and 'arey



Builders of New Delhi: Seated in the backdrop of the scaffolding at the building site of Rashtrapati Bhavan (then called Viceroy Court) in the mid 1920s is one of the major contractor for the building and marble work. Mr. Nanig Ram (Seated fourth from right). Sir Sobha Singh Standing at extreme left.

wali' machines installed, with electrically propelled saws, to cut huge boulders/stones to proper dimensions required.

The original schedule to complete the work of the main landmark Government buildings was around 8-10 years. Just as the preparations were moving towards the next stage, war was looming large on the European continent, for what came to be known as the Great Patriotic War of 1914. Britain was at the centre of the conflagration, which unwittingly assumed alarming proportions, engulfing an increasing number of countries. For the war effort, resources were diverted wherever possible, to fund the rising expenditure. One of the casualties was the amount earmarked for the construction of the newly coming up Indian capital city. Major expenses were put on hold.

From its colonies like India, the requirement was not just for finances but fighting force. So, a recruitment drive was mounted. The dozen odd major local contractors engaged in construction of New Delhi at that time, were asked for help in the recruitment of soldiers. They were needed to fight in the Anatolia region, where the Ottoman Empire once flourished, North Africa and the Middle East theatre, in addition to the Continent. Attractive propositions of big contracts and land at throwaway prices were dangled for the contractors, if they came forward to provide active help towards the war effort. A sizable fighting fit force was brought together in India and dispatched to the war front, through initiative of contractors.

Unwittingly, colonial India got involved in a bloody event, in which its national interest was not even at stake. Recruited Indian volunteer soldiers fought bravely on the side of the Allied powers, without getting commensurate recognition or monetary benefits. Gallantry awards given grudgingly at lower levels, were no compensation for the number of lives lost and sacrifices made.

Nanig Ram, neither a mercenary nor a greedy hardcore business-

man, was not allured by the promises of riches offered. Instead, he continued to pursue his area of core competence, concentrating on the designated work diligently. Sure enough, fresh opportu-

nities were waiting to come by his way. From being material supplier to a sculptor craftsman in the initial settling down process on arrival in Delhi, Nanig Ram was hamstrung by not having office infrastructure, mannerism and the social grace, to back him up for the liaison work with the English establishment. He had observed that the 'early bird' contractors had made a niche for themselves, by hobnobbing with the city planners and their masters. More importantly, they had figured out how the business was done and how to make approaches to the Burra Sahibs, who took important decisions in awarding contracts.

In Sir Sobha Singh, Nanig Ram found an influential contractor, with access to decision makers. As a smart worldly-wise man, the enterprising Sikh had carved a secure place for his business activities in no time. He had put in place a team of trusted subcontractors, munshis/accountants, agents and labour recruiters. He made full use of his knack of influencing engineers and decision makers down the line, through to junior officers and clerks. He had observed that senior officers could not be won over by giving cash packets. So, he came up with an ingenious way of sending basket hampers on festive occasions like Christmas, New Year and Easter. Discreetly hidden along with cakes, chocolates, sweets with fruits on the top, were bottles of Champagne/whisky/alcoholic drinks and in some cases expensive gifts and jewelry for the wife, away from prying eyes.

A practical proposition was to work out some arrangement with Sobha Singh. So, Nanig Ram brought him as partner, to take care of the front office paperwork, signing the contracts and liaison, while he concentrated on the substantive work, pertaining to stonework, marble flooring, cutting, polishing and carving etc.

Imposing Viceregal Lodge and Council Chamber take shape

Just as World War I got underway, preparatory work for the construction of the new capital was being

planned. Among the prestigious projects on offer were the upcoming magnificent Palace for the Viceroy/Governor General and the proposed legislative assembly building,

initially called Council Chamber.

A common feature of construction was the imposing granite columns to go with ceremonial stonework, as visible façade at the forecourt of the Palace, and at the outer circular corridor on the raised first floor of the legislative assembly building. Forecourt of the Viceroy Palace was to lead into an imposing enclosure,

to what subsequently came to be known as the Durbar Hall, for formal occasions. A ceremonial chair in the style of the Royal Throne was conceived, where the Viceroy, presiding over formal occasions, would be seated on a raised platform.

The traditional Indian style architecture, on the model of the Mughals, was countered at the planning stage by Lutyens. His argument was that it did not have the constructive and geometric appearance necessary, 'to embody the idea of law and order, which had been produced out of chaos by British administration', in a typical colonial mindset of the time. Baker observed: 'the eternal beauty of classical architecture with appropriate Indian features was grafted on it', was accepted as a compromise. It was felt that this continuity would relate the Indians to their past traditions and style. It involved the sun breaker (chajja), latticed window (jaali), umbrella dome (chhatra), and lotus flower replica in stone. For this, the best stone art work had to be carved out for the upfront areas, along with the finest murals/frescoes and paintings on the ceilings and walls. It is in the backdrop of this scenario, that Nanig Ram's craftsmanship and the magic he would weave in the stones, came to the fore. From his experience in Rajasthan, he knew that the jaali(lattice) was used as veil, between elite women and the outside world. For the purpose of this

specification, it was to modulate outside temperature and direct sunlight to penetrate inside, at specific angle, to highlight a particular spot or corner. He was the natural choice to undertake this prestigious responsibility. Accordingly, the contract for this segment of Viceregal Palace, Durbar Hall, and the façade along with identical work at the Council Chamber was awarded to Nanig Ram. He did full justice to his designated responsibility.

Nanig Ram's core team, which was already engaged in cutting/polishing and carving of stonework at the stone yard was augmented, by bringing in more professional/expert support staff. For the last time during the war years, the target date for completion of the major buildings, was extended beyond 1920 to a later date, with the Viceroy taking up residence officially before the end of the decade. For the outstanding quality of work at Viceroy's Palace, he earned a testimonial that noted:

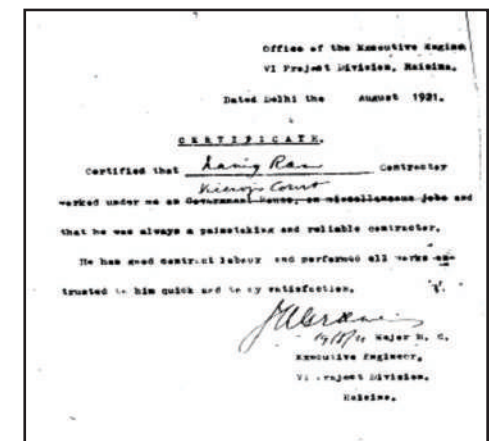
"Certified that Nanig Ram, Contractor worked under me on Viceroy's Court



Rashtrapati Bhavan(Viceroy Court)

and that he was always a painstaking and a reliable Contractor. He has good contract labour and performed all works entrusted to him quick and to my satisfaction"

.Signed/-- Executive Engineer Raisina Division August 19, 1921.



At the circular legislative building, the outer periphery was to be supported by 144 decorated granite sandstone creamcoloured pillars, on the first floor of the verandah, measuring 27 feet in height. It was the earnest effort of Nanig Ram, as per the job description given, that the façade depicted Indian architecture, aesthetically done by his craftsmen, displaying remarkable skills. This becomes visible on the fountains, sitting on either side of the structure, and the 'chajjas' that shadow the windows and walls, along with the 'jalies' made of marble, that

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blend well with modern features.

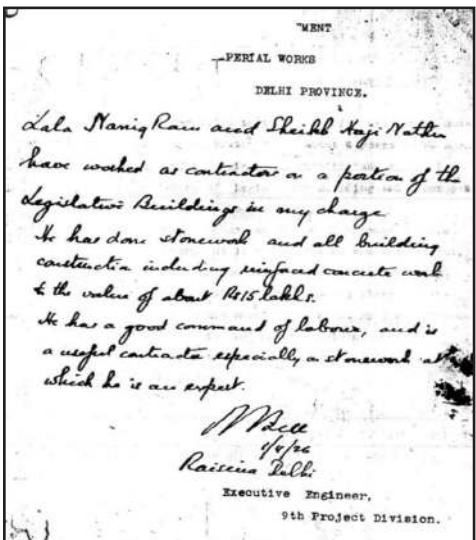
The following testament is indication of high quality of his output: "Lala Nanig Ram and Shiekh Haji Nathu have worked as Contractors in a portion of the Legislative Buildings in my charge. He has done stonework and all building construction, including reinforced concrete work to the value of about Rs 15 lakhs. He has a good command of labour, and is a useful contractor especially on stonework at which he is an expert.

Signed/ Executive Engineer 9th Project Division

The working conditions were hard in the desert like dusty surroundings on the rocky landscape. Environmental challenges proved to be an enormous health hazard. Extreme hot weather under scorching sun, made furnace like situations, making life for the working artisans unbearable, during long summer seasons. Leading from the front with such a punishing schedule, was bound to take a toll on Nanig Ram's health. Around mid-1920s serious health complications developed. It was diagnosed as Tuberculosis (TB). On medical advice he took a break by convalescing on a hill



Columns in the circular outer circle at the original Sansad building



As the main work was going on, small side projects came along Nanig Ram's way. India Gate's memorial arch for the soldiers who perished in World War 1, was planned at the other end of central vista. Behind that a pedestal, on which a tall 15 meters statue, made from gleaming marble of King George V, was to be put up, with stone canopy (chhatri) like structure above it. The architect's idea was to give a panoramic silhouette view of the statue, through the open space within India Gate, all the way from the Raisina Hill. Perfect geometric precision was on display. This expertise being part of Nanig Ram's repertoire, responsibility for organising stonework, designing of pedestal of the statue and around it, along with the chhatri overhead was awarded to him. Additionally, ornamental work, involving crafting lotus flower replicas and artwork on the fountains on either side of, what is today called Vijay Chowk on the foothill of Raisina, fell to his lot. He got kudos for his masterful display from all around.

King Edward Memorial and other works

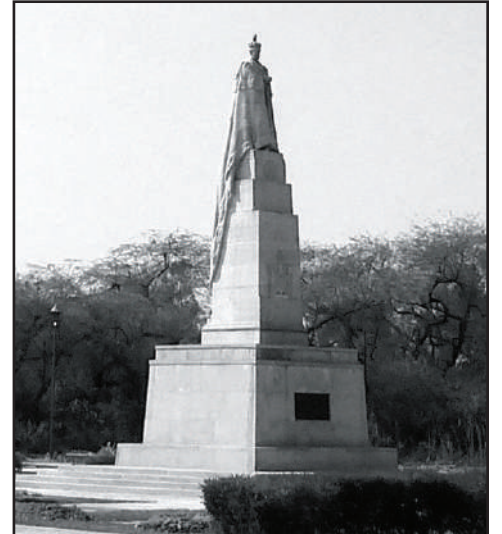
station for some time. Eldest son Mohan Lal, took control of the situation and kept the work on schedule. There was no respite for Nanig Ram on the work assignments on return from the break. While major ongoing prestigious work was at a peak on Raisina Hills and surrounding areas, he was saddled with another assignment. King Edward VII Memorial had been planned, near the old walled city between Red Fort and Jama Masjid. Its centerpiece was the imposing equestrian statue of Edward, as a sign of British dominance over the colonies.

Specially commissioned, the imposing statue weighing 5 tons, crafted by British sculptors, was brought in from England. Edward VII was depicted riding a horse in full uniform and regalia of a Field Marshal, holding plumed hat in the left hand. To this was added the local touch, through fine intricate masonry work, around the specially carved stone pedestal with ornamental base, by Nanig Ram and his talented team.

The English architect in charge



Aerial view of Central Vista-India Gate foreground



Statue of King George V with pedestal, relocated from India Gate to Coronation Park

of the PWD Department responsible for the project wrote his appreciation thus: "...Nanig Ram Contractor carried out the construction of King Edward Memorial in Delhi. This work was of particularly difficult nature. He proved a most satisfactory Contractor and had a job done to time and done exceedingly well.

W.B.Cairn. 23.8.27"

A point worth reflecting on is the present state of such a rich architectural heritage bequeathed to posterity. Things are in disarray. The re-christening of King Edward VII Memorial Park after India's independence in the 1950s, as Netaji Subhash Park was inevitable and justified in the name of indigenization. That statue was removed, along with those of King George V and other celebrities from their respective original locations in the 1960s, and moved to Kingsway Camp, renamed as Coronation Park. Today most of them lie vandalized, destroyed and chipped away on account of neglect. In the process, age-old local Indian artistic tradition is also getting lost.

By the late 1920s, Nanig Ram's contract was coming to an end. Before the area around Viceroy's Palace became out of bound, he took his wife to the Forecourt for a sneak peek. In the tastefully decorated high ceiling domed Durbar Hall was kept an imposing throne chair for the Viceroy. As a symbolic gesture of compensating for the deprivation his wife had suffered, during his absence on long working hours, he invited her to sit on it, to experience the thrill,

from that exalted haloed spot. A small but an endearing gesture towards the life partner.

Mission accomplished; honours received

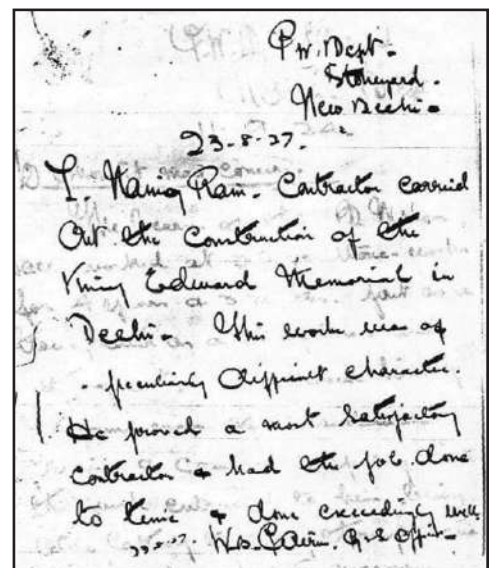
With impending winding up of their contracts approaching and having earned handsome amounts for their work, most contractors responsible for landmark Government buildings, splurged their earnings on buying up land available at throw away price, in the fast coming up new city. Those on the top of the heap, bought big sized plots of land in prime locations, of what has subsequently come to be known as Lutyens Bungalow Zone (LBZ), to the south of Raisina Hill, like Rattendon Road (Amrita Shergill Marg), Prithvi Raj Road, A.P.J Abdul Kalam (formerly Aurangzeb) Road, Jor Bagh, Lodhi Estate, Golf Links, Windsor Place, Janpath etc. The next best prized location was in central district areas of Curzon Road (K.G. Marg), Barakhamba Road, Hailey Road etc. High fliers like Sir Sobha Singh, in addition, bought huge commercial plots in Connaught Place, Regal Building, Scindia House, Lodhi Road etc. Others opted for more modest places further away for their purpose.

Nanig Ram bought decent size residential plots at Hanuman Road, off Parliament Street, where Kothi No 53 became his dwelling place. He had foreseen that its strategic location would add to its prestige and value, being next to the first fashionable shopping area, named Connaught Place, inaugurated in 1931. In that

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Statue of King Edward VII, being installed on the space between Red Fort and Jama Masjid



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hour of celebration, he did not forget his bustee wallahs, with modest means. He advised and helped them buy plots in less expensive areas on the periphery, like Paharganj/Arya Nagar/Karol Bagh. He invested in some properties himself, next to theirs. That included a big plot, where he planned to construct a community centre, to be known as 'Soni Hall'. Later on that was converted into Imperial Cinema.

Sadly, Nanig Ram was not destined to see completion of his Hanuman Road mansion, far less live in it. Most of his life, he had roughed it out with the family at temporary living quarters near Talkatora Garden in the area opposite Birla Mandir (Outram Square). One hot summer day, as he returned home after a grueling day at the worksite in 1929, he complained that the excruciating pain from the abscess wound on his back was becoming unbearable. TB had already started affecting his vital organs. He became bed ridden. Back then, medical facilities available in the newly

emerging city were hardly adequate. He could not recover and passed away, virtually in harness, even before he had

labour and material.' The saddest part is the absence of Nanig Ram at the formal inauguration of the capital city of

This Sanad is given to M/s Nanig Ram and Sons Contractors in recognition of their services in connection with the construction of New Delhi.

Irwin Viceroy and Governor General The 2nd April 1931, New Delhi". (For the uninitiated, the expression 'Sanad' of Arabic origin, pertains to 'citation'. In British India, it was a deed granted to native princely rulers and eminent persons, confirming their status, for the services rendered.) Nanig Ram's passing away in 1929, marked the end of an era. The funeral scene was a touching one. The extended family, and the entire clan came up with the idea of engraving his foot prints



Disfigured statues of George V, Viceroy Irwin and Lord Hardinge shifted from original places, among others to Coronation Park, New Delhi in the 1960s.

crossed the threshold age of 50 years of age.

The unfinished job of completion of headquarters of the newly created Tehsil of Mutt in Mathura District, was completed by his sons. Agra Provincial Division appreciated that the out turn of job was very good. It was lauded that the builders 'are men of means, having great command over

New Delhi, by Viceroy and Governor General Lord Irwin, in April 1931. Testimonials and awards were ceremoniously presented to those, who contributed significantly to the construction of the capital city. In his place his eldest son accepted the honours.

The Sanad in the name of Nanig Ram and Sons reads as follows: SEAL The SANAD*

on a marble slab, as a touching gesture of abiding veneration. An acknowledged community leader, ideal family man and a caring father, he had ensured that apart from formal education, his children imbibed proper discipline and cultural values. A colossus in his own right, Nathu Ram's soul was rooted in the age-old classical tradition.



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