

Gola Gokarn Nath, Lakhimpur Khiri (A Holy Shrine of Lord Shiva)

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- Gola Gokarn Nath:** Gola Gokarn Nath is a famous shrine of Lord Shiva. Mountain 'Mansarovar' in Himalayas is believed to be the abode of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati. Ravana, the king of demons of Lanka, was a staunch devotee of Lord Shiva. Demons were in fact



Gola Gokarn Nath

those humans who used to remain involved in demonic acts bereft of positivity, creativity and equanimity what are called in spiritual terms *satoguna*, *rajoguna* and *tamoguna*. Sattvik means constructive, harmonious or full of goodness. Rajas means passion or confusion and Tamas means darkness or destruction. Ravana had undergone long and difficult penances several times in his life time to please Lord Shiva. The story goes that Ravana had beheaded and offered his head ten times to Lord Shiva as mark of

his devotion to Shiva but all the times, due to blessings of Lord

Shiva, he regained his slit heads and as a result thereof he became a warrior king with ten heads and came to be called 'Dashanan' which means a person with ten mouths (heads). Ravana had got Lord Shiva so much pleased that Shiva never denied him his blessings and always fulfilled the desires and demands of Ravana.

On one such occasion when Lord Shiva got pleased due to the long and painful penance of Ravana, Lord Shiva asked Ravana about his desire which he wished to be fulfilled by Lord Shiva. This time, Ravana played wise and sought an assurance from Lord Shiva that He would certainly fulfil his desire and would not disappoint him. Lord Shiva, famous among gods for getting pleased early, assured Ravana that He would certainly fulfil his desire irrespective of the nature of desire put forth by Ravana. Ravana then asked Shiva to leave



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his abode in Himalayas forever and accompany him to Lanka so that Ravana might install and settle him in Lanka forever. Bound by his promise made to Ravana, Lord Shiva could not deny and, willingly or unwillingly, accepted the request of Ravana with the condition that Ravana would take Him to Lanka on his head in the form of one of the twelve Jyotirlingas (illuminous deity of stone of Lord Shiva) and during the journey from Himalayas to Lanka he would not put Him on earth anywhere and if this condition was breached by Ravana and the Jyotirling (deity of Lord Shiva) is put on earth then Lord Shiva would not move from there and would get automatically and permanently installed and settled at that place.

2. **Tall Statue of Lord Shiva in Gola Gokarn Nath Town:** On way to Lanka when Ravana reached a place in present day district of Uttar Pradesh called Lakhimpur Khiri, he had to answer call of nature. Being cautious of the condition of not putting the deity of Lord Shiva on earth, Ravana requested a person present there to keep the deity on his head for sometime so that he might answer the call of nature. The person kept the deity of Lord Shiva on his head but could not



bear with the weight of the deity and put it on the earth and as such the condition attached to the migration of Lord Shiva with Ravana from Himalayas to Lanka stood breached. On returning back to the place when Ravana saw the deity kept on earth he lost no times to realise that inauspicious act had occurred but Ravana still tried to lift the deity from the earth and put it on his head again. Ravana applied all his bodily might to lift the deity and put it on

his head but failed. Ravana got frustrated and angry and pressed the deity angrily with his right thumb. As a result of pressing of the deity, part of the deity went into the earth and only part of it remained above the surface of the earth. Because of pressing on the deity by the mighty Ravana, a cut like mark emerged on the deity. This cut mark on deity looked like the ear of a cow. The mission of Ravana displacing Lord Shiva from His usual abode in Himalayas had failed. The deity thus got permanently installed there. Since the mark created on the deity due to the pressing by Ravana looked like the ear of a cow, the devotees started calling this idol of Lord Shiva as 'Gokarn Nath'. The place where this deity is settled later on came to be known as 'Gola Gokarn Nath'. The word 'Gokarn' is a word of Sanskrit language made of two separate words: Go + Karn. Word 'Go' in Sanskrit language means 'cow' and 'Karn' means 'ear'. 'Gokarn Nath' thus means "idol of Lord Shiva which looks like ear of a cow". Local people say that the place where the 'Gokarn Nath Shrine' of Lord Shiva is situated today was initially known as 'Gollihara'. It is claimed by many that sometime in the history, word 'Gola' was affixed to the words 'Gokarn Nath' and the shrine thus came to be christened as 'Gola Gokarn Nath'.

3. **Lord Shiva in Gola Gokarn shrine below surface of the earth:** The above story depicting as to how the deity of Lord Shiva got settled at 'Gola Gokarn Nath'. The story carries a spiritual and philosophical message



Idol of Gola Gokarn Nath after being pressed by Ravana

as well. Lord Shiva in Hindu scriptures has been described as the God of Gods and the origin and end of the visible universe takes place within Him. Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh, three main gods in Hinduism, in fact symbolise three main architects of the universe. Brahma is believed to be the Creator, Vishnu the Preservator and Shiva the Destructor but Lord Shiva being god of gods holds all the three powers into Him and the three main acts of the universe i.e. creation, preservation and destruction endlessly continue to happen within the infinite universe or within infinite Lord Shiva within whom lies the infinite universe. Lord Shiva being god of gods is believed to be beyond times, beyond human intellect and wisdom and can be realised only through meditation in abstract through the connect of the pure soul to the abstract or formless Shiva. Word 'Shiva' means 'well-being' of the Self Soul which is absolutely pure, free from worldly or materialistic vices and karmic characteristics. Ravana had tried to keep the well-beingness attained from the blessings of the divinity due to his good deeds (satvik karmas) but had mixed his good deeds with bad deeds like worldly temptations, uncontrolled ambitions and endless desires. Ravana had thus departed from the righteous path of spirituality required of a true spiritualist aiming to attain self salvation by pure or satvik karmas by keeping detached from the worldly vices. Ravana had forgotten about the omnipresence of God i.e. Lord Shiva and aimed to take away Him and confine Him to a particular place known as Lanka which was under his control. This misunderstanding of Ravana regarding the true character of God or Shiva and his attempt to keep the blessings of divinity forever with him by confining it unto himself by rendering the rest of the world without blessings of the divinity ultimately proved Ravana wrong and for that reason he not only lost the divine pleasure but also the worldly empire which he had built with much valour and labour.

4. **Misconception of Ravana about true nature of Lord Shiva** : Ravana, driven by anger, which is a self-destructive state of jeeva (creature), forgot that by getting angry he had lost his positivity and creativity which are essential to gain ‘equanimity’ in intellect and mind to deter the ordinary human weaknesses like anger or passions. Lord Shiva i.e. well-beingness of the Self, could not have been gained and retained by Ravana in the intellect and mind by resorting to wordly passions and anger etc. Having once lost the state of equanimity in intellect and mind, Ravana could no longer retain Shiva or Shivatava (well-beingness) and had to lose Him and return to Lanka empty headed (read-empty handed). This loss to Ravana gives a message to a practitioner of spirituality to remain alert that passions should not be allowed to snatch from him his hard-earned equanimity and detachment

“ जनहित पावर ” हिन्दी दैनिक
गोला चेयरमैन के आवास पर हुई बैठक में
पहुँचे महामहिम राज्यपाल के विधिक सलाहकार

संवाददाता गोला गोकर्णनाथ खीरी। महामहिम राज्यपाल उत्तर प्रदेश के भगवान शिव के मंदिर में पूजा अर्चना की तत्पश्चात नगर पालिका परिषद गोला की अध्यक्ष मीनाक्षी अग्रवाल के संतराम भारती एवं महामंत्री राकेश त्रिपाठी, राम कृष्ण एडवोकेट, उच्च न्यायालय लखनऊ के शासकीय अधिवक्ता निर्देश दीक्षित, युवराज दत्त महाविद्यालय के पूर्व उपाध्यक्ष अरविंद पांडेय और समासद नानक चंद्र वर्मा, पियुष मिश्रा, अनीस अहमद, आनंद प्रकाश शुक्ल, वैजनाथ अग्निहोत्री, वीरसिंह चौहान, ओमप्रकाश वर्मा, विमलेश मिश्र, ललित वर्मा, संजीव दीक्षित, डॉक्टर वीरेश वाजपेयी, ब्रजेश मिश्र, राम किशन गुप्ता, शशिकांत मिश्र, अनिल गुप्ता, संजीव गुप्ता, आदित्य गुप्ता, मयंक दीक्षित, आविष्कार अग्निहोत्री, विवेक पांडेय, शिवम सिंह, राजेश गिरी एडवोकेट के साथ ही नगर के गणमान्य नागरिकों ने मुख्य अतिथि का माल्यार्पण कर स्वागत किया। कार्यक्रम का संचालन मनोज श्रीवास्तव ने किया।



विधिक सलाहकार एवं सेवानिवृत्त जिला जज एस० एस० उपाध्याय ने आवास पर बैठक हुई। जिसमें सेंट्रल बार एसोसिएशन गोला के अध्यक्ष

अधिवक्ता निर्देश दीक्षित, युवराज दत्त महाविद्यालय के पूर्व उपाध्यक्ष अरविंद पांडेय और समासद नानक चंद्र वर्मा, पियुष मिश्रा, अनीस अहमद, आनंद प्रकाश शुक्ल, वैजनाथ अग्निहोत्री, वीरसिंह चौहान, ओमप्रकाश वर्मा, विमलेश मिश्र, ललित वर्मा, संजीव दीक्षित, डॉक्टर वीरेश वाजपेयी, ब्रजेश मिश्र, राम किशन गुप्ता, शशिकांत मिश्र, अनिल गुप्ता, संजीव गुप्ता, आदित्य गुप्ता, मयंक दीक्षित, आविष्कार अग्निहोत्री, विवेक पांडेय, शिवम सिंह, राजेश गिरी एडवोकेट के साथ ही नगर के गणमान्य नागरिकों ने मुख्य अतिथि का माल्यार्पण कर स्वागत किया। कार्यक्रम का संचालन मनोज श्रीवास्तव ने किया।

due to indulgence in ordinary human weaknesses often produced by worldly temptations, passions, ego or anger. Lord Shiva, being omnipresent in

formless form, can be seen, realized and visualized anywhere any time, or all the time, through the third eye which is the eye of gyan, vivek and vairagya (pure knowledge, pure prudence and complete detachment). Every human being, and perhaps other living organisms too, possesses this third

eye but it needs to be opened by pushing aside and cleansing the garbage and diatribe of *karma* (worldly actions) performed by being driven by worldly desires and passions. Philosophically speaking, this universe is the external manifestation of the Cosmic Being (Brahm or God). As propounded in Vedas, Upnishadas and various Smritis, the Brahm or God is not particular place-centric and is present everywhere in every subtle particle of this universe and for that reason in idols as well. Brahm (or Lord Shiva) is without origin or beginning, mid or end, formless but still in innumerable forms, easily seeable and perceivable all around. Limitlessness and infinite

स्यष्ट आवाज शाहजहांपुर-मुरादा
गोला का विकास व भगवान शिव की महिमा अपरम्पार : एसएस उपाध्याय



राज्यपाल के विधिक सलाहकार को सम्मानित करती मीनाक्षी अग्रवाल व करुण अग्रवाल

गोलागोकर्णनाथ-खीरी। भगवान शिव की नगरी छोटी काशी में मुझे आने का सौभाग्य प्राप्त हुआ। जिसके लिए मैं भगवान शिव के चरणों में सिर झुकाकर आशीष मांगता हूँ। गोला की धरा पर कदम रखते ही देखा कि यहाँ का पर्यावरण अत्यंत मनमोहक है और उससे अधिक यहाँ की सभ्यता व संस्कृति है, जिसका प्रमाण है कि आप सभी ने मुझ अजनबी को इतना सम्मान दिया। मैंने गोला नगर में प्रवेश करते ही नगर को देखा और पाया कि नगर में विकास कार्य किए जा रहे हैं। उक्त वक्तव्य राज्यपाल के विधिक सलाहकार एसएस उपाध्याय ने गोला में चेयरमैन मीनाक्षी अग्रवाल के आवास पर आयोजित एक कार्यक्रम में बतौर मुख्य अतिथि व्यक्त किए। उन्होंने कहा कि गोला की सभ्यता, संस्कृति व पर्यावरण व उसके प्रति लोगों की जागरूकता की मैं कोटि-कोटि प्रशंसा करता हूँ। साथ ही भगवान शिव के बारे में मुझे जो ज्ञान है वह बताता हूँ कि भगवान शिव जब लंकापति रावण

राज्यपाल के विधिक सलाहकार ने किए शिव के दर्शन
 राज्यपाल के विधिक सलाहकार एसएस उपाध्याय ने नगर पालिका अध्यक्ष मीनाक्षी अग्रवाल व मीनाक्षी यूथ विंगेड के साथ भगवान शिव के ऐतिहासिक व पौराणिक मन्दिर पहुँचे और चेयरमैन के साथ भगवान भोले नाथ की विधि-विधान से पूजा अर्चना करते हुए माथा टेका और कम से कम वर्ष में एक बार गोला आकर भगवान शिव के दर्शन करने की कामना की।

के साथ जाने को तैयार हुए और शर्व के अनुसार जब गोला में विराजमान हुए तो सोचो यह स्थान कितना मनमोहक होगा। जो भगवान शिव को पसंद आया। उन्होंने कहा कि भगवान शिव के त्रिशूल को तीन नोकें हमको दैविक, दैहिक व भौतिक सुखों के बारे में बताती हैं। यह इन तीन बातों को हम समझ लें तो मानव जीवन कष्टों से परे हो जायेगा। कार्यक्रम में चेयरमैन मीनाक्षी अग्रवाल व प्रमुख समाजसेवी करुण अग्रवाल ने फूल मालाओं से लादकर उनका सम्मान किया। इसी के साथ अंगवस्त्र भी भेंट किए गए। सेंट्रल बार एसोसिएशन के महामंत्री राकेश त्रिपाठी, अरविन्द पाण्डेय, निर्देश दीक्षित, संत राम भारती एड, मयंक दीक्षित व मीनाक्षी यूथ विंगेड की पूरी टीम ने मुख्य अतिथि का माल्यार्पण कर सम्मान किया। कार्यक्रम के अंत में चेयरमैन मीनाक्षी अग्रवाल ने आए हुए मुख्य अतिथि, अतिथियों का आभार

व्यक्त करते हुए धन्यवाद ज्ञापित किया संचालन अधिवक्ता मनोज श्रीवास्तव ने किया। इस मौके पर गौरव शर्मा, सुधीर कोहली, आनन्द प्रकाश शुक्ला, रामकृष्ण गुप्ता, नगर पालिका परिषद के प्रधान लिपिक राजेश चार्जेड सहित तमाम गणमान्य नागरिक मौजूद रहे।

vastness of Lord Shiva is beyond the capacity of human intellect, mind, wisdom or knowledge and His true character can be felt through complete surrender and devotion to Him.

In September, 2018, this author was taken from Lucknow to the shrine of Gola Gokarn Nath by Sri Nirdesh Kumar Dixit Advocate, an Additional Government Advocate (AGA), at the Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court. Sri Dixit is native of the town of Gola Gokarn Nath where his family resides. On way from Lucknow to Gola Gokarn Nath in district Lakhimpur Khiri, Sri Dixit continued to tell me about the historicity and importance of the shrine of Lord Shiva. On reaching the shrine, the I

found that a gathering of respectable citizens of the township of Gola Gokarn Nath along with Smt. Meenakshi Agarwal, Chairperson of the Gola Gokarn Nath Nagarpalika, were waiting for my arrival. They took me to the sanctum sanctorum where I performed traditional *pooja* of the deity of the Gola Gokarn Nath by pouring pure water and milk on the head of the deity, flowers and other *pooja* items. Expressing my devotion to Lord Shiva of the Gola Gokarn Nath, I took a round of the premises of the shrine and tried to understand the historical facts and beliefs of the people which led the shrine to come into being. I told the priest that during 1958 to 1962, my father Pt. Ram Dular Upadhyay had visited the shrine of Gola Gokarn Nath and had offered a



pagaha (rope to tie the pet animals like cows, bulls and buffalos). The belief was that the Lord Shiva of Gola Gokarn Nath gets pleased on being presented *pagaha* of the pet animals and then Lord blesses the animals and saves them from dying from diseases. When enquired, the priest told that no record or registers of the visitors to the shrine are maintained and for that reason it was simply not possible for me to verify the exact date and the year when my father had paid his visit to this shrine to offer *pagaha* to Lord Gola Gokarn Nath. I had been since the days of my childhood hearing from the elderly of the family that my father had come to this shrine on bicycle during 1958-1962 from my village: Ghorka Talukdari, district: Pratapgarh covering about 400 Kms cumbersome journey on bicycle.

The citizens of the Gola Gokarn Nath town had organized a felicitation programme for me and besides the people of the town, several senior advocates including the President and Secretary of the District Bar Association, Lakhimpur Khiri, several Principals and Teachers of the colleges in and around the town, doctors, police and administrative officers, elected representatives of the Municipality of Gola Gokarn Nath, students, businessmen and the media personnel were present in good numbers on that occasion. Smt. Meenakshi Agarwal, Chairperson of the Gola Gokarn Nath Nagarpalika, and her husband Sri Varun Agarwal, a social activist and very popular among local people for his several acts of charity, had surprised me by giving me this unexpected public honour in their town on my said visit. I noticed that there is a lot of greenery around the township of Gola Gokarn Nath and the people of the area are not only quite



environment friendly but much friendly to the visitors to the shrine and their town. The high words spoken by many on the occasion of my felicitation left an impression on me that the people of the Gola Gokarn Nath township are much civilized, well-behaved and well-cultured people even today in the age of materialistic 21st century and the noble virtues which this historic shrine of Gola Gokarn Nath has been spreading to the human society over the centuries is very well reflected in the people of the town of Gola Gokarn Nath. That was really a memorable visit of mine to this historic shrine of Gola Gokarn Nath.

5. **Lord Shiva, the God of Gods:** Indian philosophy recognises three eternal elements in the universe and they are brahm (God), jeev (creatures or living organism) and maya (illusion that does not exist). The two elements- jeev and maya, have no independent



existence of theirs and have their genesis into the brahm as its integral entities under its full control. Brahm, therefore, is the only singular entity spread all around in this infinite universe. Jeev and maya operate in the universe under the directions of the brahm. The origin and end of the jeev and maya is from and into the brahm. This visible or perceivable universe in countless forms by the sensible organs like mind, intellect and wisdom is infact formless (nirakaar) but still visible in form (sakaar) due to maya. The visible or perceivable universe is thus the body or external manifestation of the brahm. The visible and illusionary universe attracts the jeev and makes it to

indulge in numerous actions (karma) for satisfying its desires. Shiva, the God of Gods, holds into Him all the three eternal elements of the universe- the brahm, jeev and maya. The word 'Shiva' literally means "well-being". Whose well-being? The well-being of the Self Soul and the universe as a whole, which holds the jeev and maya.

6. **Trishul :** Shiva holds a Trishul in his right hand. Trishul (Trident) is a composite Sanskrit word made of two separate words: Tri+Shul. 'Tri' means 'three' and 'Shul' means 'point of spear or thorn or suffering' . In philosophical and spiritual terms, 'Shul' means three main sufferings of the world: (1) daihik (bodily), (2) daivik (divine) and (3) bhautik (worldly). Lord Shiva, the supreme master of Yoga, holds this trident in the fist of his right hand which means that a person having attained perfection in Yoga and having reaped its ultimate benefit what is called in spiritual terms 'samatava' (equanimity in wisdom) becomes capable of exercising complete control over his bodily, divine and worldly sufferings and does not allow these three main sufferings of life to over-power him or trouble him. The trident of Shiva also symbolises the three



characteristics of karma (actions) of the jeev in the form of satvik (pure), rajsik (wordly) and tamsik (negative or destructive). Any or all of the three characteristics of karma performed by jeev emerge from the churning of life. When the negativity or destructivity emerges from the karmic churning of the life or universe, there is no taker of it and if this negativity or destructivity expands, it destabilises the life and the universe and then only the God of Gods, the Lord Shiva, comes forward, swallows and prevents the spread of the negativity and destructivity by retaining them in his throat. This retention of negativity or destructivity in throat means not to allow the negative characteristics of karma to overpower the positive tendencies of life. The nomenclature 'Neelkanth' was given to Lord Shiva after retaining the poison (negative and destructive fruits of actions) in his throat which had emerged from the churning of ocean (life or world) by the gods and demons (righteous and un-righteous). Emergence of poison (destruction) and retention of the same in the mid (throat) in fact symbolises the emergence of positivity or constructivity in life which prevents the spread of the symptoms of destructive actions in the body of life rendering it prone to the three sufferings stated above.

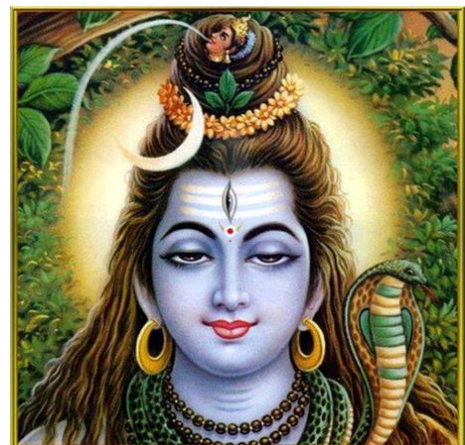
7. **Damaru** : Shiva holds 'Damaru' in his left hand. The word 'Damaru' is a distorted version of the composite Sanskrit word 'Damru' and when split into its two separate words, it becomes, Dam+Ru. Word 'Dam' in Sanskrit language means restraint or suppression and 'Ru' means 'sound'. Damaru in philosophical terms thus means:



suppressing the voices of negative tendencies coming towards spiritually enlightened person from the worldly affairs and temptations of the physical and sensible organs. An enlightened soul having attained perfect understanding of the futility of the worldly temptations remains indifferent, cool, calm and poised and in the state of equanimity un-impressed by any worldly attractions. The voice which the damaru produces can be equated with the voice of the Self Soul which always remains pure and detached and counsels to always proceed on righteous path in the

world by suppressing the unwanted worldly lusts or desires of the physical and sensible organs. Damaru thus symbolises a musical instrument of yogic spirituality in the hands of the practitioner of spirituality to warn, suppress or keep away the worldly alluring voices (demands) of the physical and sensible organs.

8. **Third Eye of Lord Shiva:** Lord Shiva, being omniscient and omnipresent, in formless form, can be seen, realized and visualized anywhere any time, or all the time, through the third eye which is the eye of gyan, vivek and vairagya (pure knowledge, pure prudence and pure detachment. Every human being, and perhaps other living organisms too, possesses this third eye but it needs to be opened by pushing aside and cleansing the garbage and diatribe of *karma* (worldly actions) performed by being driven by worldly desires and



passions. Third eye of Lord Shiva is in fact not the eye of destruction as is often preached by many while telling the story of burying of *Kaam Dev* by Shiva by opening his third eye. Destruction of *kaam* means destruction of lusts with the help of the third eye i.e. the eye of spiritual vision and wisdom capable of understanding the futility of the worldly affairs attached to the life. Incessant influx of worldly desires, temptations and the trinity of worldly sufferings (*daihik, daivik & bhautik*) can be suppressed, controlled and ultimately burnt (destroyed) by the third eye by a human being and that third eye opens with the emergence of pure knowledge, pure detachment and equanimity in mind and wisdom.

9. **Ganga and Moon on the head of Lord Shiva:** Ganga originates from Gangotri in Himalayas. The purest water of Ganga is found at the place of her origin at the Gangotri. Once leaving its source i.e. the Gangotri, Ganga-water rapidly flows towards the plains to



Ganga emerging from Himalayas

quench the thirst of the thirsty creatures, flora and fauna of the plains suffering from the scorching heat of the sun. Ganga-water renders the creatures cool, calm and content by mitigating their thirst and heat (sufferings). Soul of the creatures in their living bodies is in the role of the Gangotri. Soul is always full of purest thoughts, purest ideas, purest counsellings and sane

voices. A person puzzled and troubled with the excessive pressure of worldly affairs or negative ideas can seek the pure, cool and sane advice from his self soul and if he has caliber to listen to the sane voice of his self soul, he can mitigate his sufferings and replace the negative ideas and sufferings produced by the uncontrolled desires by coolness, calmness and equanimity offered to him by his self soul. Symbolically, Ganga is held by Shiva on his head (mind) and her water flows downward. Similarly, the pure ideas and the sane advice can flow from the mind of an enlightened person to guide him only when the mind has some connect with its origin, the self soul. The role of the self soul in the body is thus like the role of the Gangotri to Ganga held on head (mind) by Shiva. Moon is believed to hold nectar (*amrit*) into it. Moon is cool and luminous. Moon is believed to be promoter of imaginations and ideas. A person possessing the characteristics of moon into his head (mind) thinks with cool and calm mind which produces positive outcomes like that of the nectar which promotes, not erodes, the life.

10. Role of serpents with Shiva: Serpents around the neck of Lord Shiva symbolize the different subjects of the five physical and five sensible organs of the creatures / humans. These organs by reason of their very nature tempt towards their worldly attractions. Despite presence of horrible and venomous serpents around His neck, Lord Shiva, being the supreme master of yoga in the universe, does not feel perturbed and remains indifferent, unmoved and in the state of equanimity. Shiva does not even make any effort to get these serpents away from Him. Shiva simply ignores them and does not take notice of their presence though they are so close to Him and around His neck. This form of Shiva gives a message to the practioner of yogic spirituality to attain that state of mind which does not feel allured, bothered and moved by the innumerable desires and demands of the physical and sensible organs and to remain unmoved, unimpressed and indifferent to them.



11. Nandi: The bull sitting in front of Lord Shiva, symbolizes a creature/ person who is completely ignorant of all sorts of knowledge contained in holy scriptures. Nandi, the bull, is thus the symbol of ignorance but he is yet sitting there in the close vicinity of



Lord Shiva completely unworried, unwanting and looking only towards Shiva. This posture of Nandi indicates that one does not need too much knowledge, intellect, wisdom, study of holy scriptures, listening to scholarly discourses on religiosity and spirituality etc. for purposes of attaining happiness (bliss) and blessings of the divinity. What is needed is the devotion and dedication to the Supreme Master of the universe i.e. Lord Shiva. Once having surrendered to the wish and will of the Master, the *jeev* (creature) becomes tension-free, depression-free, sufferings-free, wantings-free and free from all

the bodily, wordly and divine sufferings and permanently settles into the state of bliss like Nandi, the ignorant bull, but yet clever enough. What the ignorant but clever bull Nandi attained effortlessly by merely surrendering to his Master could not be attained by many sages, scholars and practioners of religiosity and spirituality despite their life long painful penances.

12. Intellectuals of Lakhimpur Khiri: During this visit of mine to Gola Gokarn Nath in district



Lakhimpur Khiri, Sri Nirdesh Kumar Dixit Advocate, AGA at the Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court, took me to the Annual Meet of the Brahmins' Community of district: Lakhimpur Khiri. The Brahmins of Lakhimpur Khiri have built a center of their community on

the outskirts of the city of Lakhimpur Khiri. They are perhaps the first Brahmins' organisation in the State of Uttar Pradesh who have built any building or center of their own where they meet periodically to discuss the problems of their community. I was told that the center is also used by the community for organizing events like marriages and other ceremonies of the members of the community. I was apprised that the Brahmins of the district Lakhimpur Khiri, both from rural and city area, by and large, observe the traditional code of conduct of their forefathers and keep themselves and their siblings away from modern day vices like non-vegetarianism, liquor and other intoxicants. On being enquired whether they and their siblings perform *yajna*, *sandhya* (*trikal sandhya*) and chant *gayatri mantra* in their homes, many of them smiled and I had got the answer in their silence. A big portrait of Bhagwan Parashuram was installed in the hall where the event was being organised. A big *farasha* (sharp edged cutting weapon) in the right hand of Bhagwan Parashuram was looking both fierce and attractive. The Bhagwan in the portrait was shown in a good body built as if he was advancing towards someone to assault with the *farasha* held in his right hand. The mood of the Bhagwan, instead of looking to be cool, calm and poised, looked to be grim and angry. Such portraits or photographs of Bhagwan Parashuram are often seen on the walls in the homes of the members of the Brahmins' community, on their visiting cards, letter pads and also at the occasion of periodical events which the self-incarnated (swayambhoo) and self-proclaimed leaders of the Brhamins' community and the innumerable organizations formed by them hold from time to



time. I have been since the days of my understanding of the caste and community system of India wondering as to what message the leaders and representatives of the Brhamins' community aim to pass to the other castes and communities of the society in India, especially in north India, by



declaring Bhagwan Parashuram as their iconic source of inspiration. Why Bhagwan Parashuram has been given primacy by the Brahmins and their innumerable organizations over their other heroes like Brahma, Brihaspati, Adi Shankaracharya, Vashistha, Goddess Saraswati, Saptarishi, Chankya and similar other great scholarly icons which the Brahmins' community has produced in the history. I had conveyed my idea to Sri Niradesh Kumar Dixit of speaking eloquently on Bhagwan Parashuram, his preachings and teachings, achievements etc. during my address to the gathering of Brahmins. I was a little hesitant whether during my address on the occasion I should stay firm on my views which I have been nurturing over the decades on Bhagwan Parashuram or I should simply give my lip service which people often do on ceremonial occasions like the one I was invited at. It is generally seen that while speaking publically, any worldly wise speaker

avoids uncomfortable subjects and covers in his speech only comfortable and generally known to

all subjects and contents which soothes and amuses the audience and the hosts. Since I was assured by Sri Dixit and certain other responsible persons having organized the event that I might feel free and stay relaxed in choosing my contents to be delivered to the audience including the hosts, my worry about the contents of my speech which I wished to share with the audience had diminished to certain extent but still, having quite rich bundle of experience on my head as to how people in big gatherings suddenly start reacting and behaving, was still there with me to guide me in selecting the contents for delivery on the said occasion.