

I don't want to reduce my identity to just being Kashmiri Pandit, says Kaul



In a freewheeling chat with Citizen Eye's Syed Jesarat, the Indian academic, poet and the author of novel 'Residue', Nitasha Kaul talks about her experience as a writer and gave suggestions to budding writers.

CE: Let's start with a basic question. Why do you write?

NK: I think that reading writing has been the primary means through which I have made sense of the world around me from a very early age and I am drawn to the idea of imagining things otherwise then they actually are because I think it is an important thing to not be limited only by what we are surrounded by but also to retain the idea of how things could be different and better.

CE: Tell us about your book. What it tries to convey?

NK: This book is titled Residue, because it's that which remains with us when we move on with events and as we move across national borders. In terms of time and traces of history, and that is why some of the settings of the book, the characters are Kashmiri; much of it is set in Berlin. There is lot more in the book, about power, boundaries, identity, gender, so all of these are woven in the narrative of the book.

CE: What is the most difficult thing about writing characters from the opposite sex?

NK: I don't think it's difficult, it just requires the work of imagination and observation. You see most of the historical characters of women have been written by men as well as men by women. There is an anxiety whether you've got it write or not, but that anxiety has not to do with gender but

it could be with caste, gender, race, caste.

CE: What would be your message to budding writers?

NK: Be more systematic, write more, and be more disciplined. Be a harder task master on yourself. Be organized and have good routine. And also, I would tell myself to work hard.

CE: Do you view writing as a kind of spiritual practice?

NK: I think it can be, it doesn't have to be. It depends on what story one is telling and what one wants to convey. There is not something necessarily spiritual; you can write stuff as a craft not as art. It is possible to be sometimes more connected towards somebody, when you know you have connected with and conveyed it. And that point it is spiritual.

CE: How political are you? A novel will have its own politics, of course, but when you write, is it a political act at all?

NK: Yes, I am a political being. I think political aspect of our life is important. Alice Walker once said, "Activism is my rent for living in this planet". Explicit political work is more active in my academic or non-fictional work and in my fictional work its political not with capital P (party politics) but with small P.

CE: There are people who are not interested in reading novels, how to encourage them & make books appealing to them?

NK: I think that this problem is increasingly everywhere, because of the onslaught of technology, scattered concen-

tration. To encourage reading, some of it has to be institutionalized, there should be access to libraries, there should be reading groups, and it should be inculcated in a very young age. It's a conscious effort.

CE: Is being a writer a gift or a curse?

NK: It's not either a curse or a gift. Sometimes gift's can be curses and curses can be gifts as well. On one hand writer has connection to the different world, the magical world and sometimes it might be difficult to manage reality. It might make you impractical. But I don't think it's with everyone, people have different notions.

CE: Being a Kashmiri Pandit, why don't you write about your nativeness, about your community?

NK: I don't think I am just a Kashmiri Pandit. I am an academician, a feminist, a woman with particular history. I don't want to reduce my identity to a particular thing. And I believe my Kashmiriyat is not marked by any religion. It's also I haven't held the gun or lived as a refugee, both of these things mean I would tell it when I want to tell for my personal ethics, and I won't tell it because it will sell.

CE: Kashmir has no institutionalized setup for budding writers. What advice would you give to aspiring writers?

NK: There should be a lot more social spaces to discuss books. Institutionally there should be workshops as well.

Individually, we have internet, when it's not shut off. Writers should use imagination, patience and be courageous. Create and keep writing where ever you can write. Read, write, Imagine is the mantra for writing.

CRPF helped Kashmiri footballers to play in Spain

CE BUREAU SRINAGAR:

The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) of the Government of India, in a unique gesture, has helped two talented young Indian footballers have a date with Spain and play the beautiful game in the heavyweight European football nation with a club named Sociedad Deportiva Lenense Proinastur, who play in the third tier of Spanish football.

Basit Ahmed, a centre forward and Muhammed Asrar Rehbar, a winger, is the lucky duo entering a new journey in their career. They were selected following a talent hunt that was conducted by the CRPF across Jammu and Kashmir.

The CRPF tied up with the Spanish club to send the best of Indian talents from the terror-stricken region to have a chance to play the highest level of football.

"Football is a very popular game in Jammu and Kashmir," CRPF spokesperson told Citizen Eye. "Kashmir has produced top class players who have gone on to play at both National and International level like Abdul Majid Kakroo,

Ishfaq Ahmed and Mehrajuddin Wadoo.

"The Ops Kashmir sector of CRPF partnered with Football Next Foundation to identify and encourage the best talent in the sport in Kashmir. A tie-up was made with Sociedad Deportiva Lenense, Proinastur club. The club agreed to take on contract a player for the position of Central forward and Right winger for the coming 2017 January window," the spokesman added.

Entirely based on their talent and merit, Basit and Muhammed Asrar enthralled a three-member selection committee, consisting of Anit Ghosh, Ishfaq Ahmed and Hilal Rasool Parray, to make the major breakthrough.

The duo has been offered a two-year contract each and reportedly, all expenses will be paid by the Spanish club.

While talking to Citizen Eye Basit told that it's a dream come true. One can only dream about it. Today this dream is translated into reality. "I had never thought about it. Competition was very tough. I'm happy that Basit got selected. I have also got chance to learn there and give my best," Asrar added.



A frozen canal in Hazratbal area of Srinagar as temperature goes down to minus 5 degree.

Official slackness turns property worth lakhs continue to rot at JU

CE BUREAU JAMMU: The slackness of mismanagement at Jammu University could be gauged from the fact that varsity administration remained unmoved while property worth lakhs continue to rot on the campus.

In the recent case of carefree approach of the JU administration, vehicle worth lakhs of rupees stand abandoned at Health center for the last more than two years, unused and untouched.

According to sources, huge amount has been spent on raising the transport fleet but the funds seem drained in the absence of proper care.

"If one happens to visit Health Centre of university, it will tell that for the unknown reasons, one car in a good condition remained unused for the last over two years and there is no one in the university to ascertain the reasons for keeping the vehicle abandoned," sources said and added that instead the incumbent VC has purchased new car despite availability of good conditioned vehicles for official use.

It was alleged that there is no accountability for using govt vehicles in university as even the administration seems in deep slumber to keep close check of varsity vehicles and POL being used for plying them.

Talking to Citizen Eye, an official of Jammu University, wishing anonymity said that the vehicle apparently abandoned is property of JU and was attached to particular department on the request of the head, but with the change of head, the need of vehicle was not felt, so administration suggested to park it in health center.

Mehbooba broke down while remembering Father



CE BUREAU JAMMU:

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister-Mehbooba Mufti broke down and left the dais, while remembering her father and former chief minister-Late Mufti Mohammad Sayeed during a release of biography of later.

During the release of biography of Mufti Sayeed, compiled by journalist-turned politician MLC Firdous Tak, the chief minister said that the people close to her

father had made her emotional by touching some of the sensitive and personal memories of the former chief minister.

The Chief Minister said late Mufti Sayeed always dreamed about his people and their welfare. She said he would always advise her that service to mankind was the biggest among all the prayers before God. She said she always saw him besieged with the problems and difficulties

of common people.

Mehbooba Mufti said one of the great virtues of her father was that he taught his family to live the life of a common man despite himself being in power and position, even at highest level, for decades together. She said late Mufti Sayeed considered, and practiced all people as part of his extended family and would give the same attention to their problems as he would to his own children.

"He treated all the people like his children," she said and added that her father sued to scold senior party members and even ministers from coalition.

"Whenever, he used to scold his cabinet ministers, I felt bad and I did complain it to my father, but his clear-cut reply was, 'do no I scold you', his intentions were never bad for any person and believed in taking all communities together," she said and revealed Mufti Sahab even many times 'scolded' DyCM Nirmal Singh, but they never took it in a wrong way.

Thanking senior party members, colleagues of her father and every individual who shared views about life of Mufti Sayeed, chief minister started crying and left the dais.

No takers of RTI Act in JU

JU's 1st Appellate Authority avoids sharing complete details

CE BUREAU JAMMU: The sanctity of RTI Act 2009 is getting severely hit and eroded by none other than the University of Jammu with its First Appellate Authority deliberately avoiding to fulfil his legitimate duties towards information seeker striving to get fully correct information from the University despite reminders.

Document available with BH reveals that, President National Secular Forum floated an application requesting the 1st Appellate Authority to send replies of Paras in a correct form as the earlier response received from him (IAA) was neither correct or reply to certain points was not given at all for the reason best known to the concerned authority.

As per document, replies were not provided with regard to "Name of the institutions which have been allotted space on the university campus to run their centres/study centres, guidelines and norms (as laid down by the statutory bodies of Jammu University) for the establishment of study centres of other institutions on the varsity campus, details of charges levied on study centres being run on the JU campus, besides details about the size of land and other infrastructure provided to these study centres, details of JU officials/faculty who are offering part time service to these study centres and also details of remuneration they are getting from these study centres."

Sources told that for the last more than one month period, 1st Appellate Authority of JU has failed to provide replies to above Paras, thus violating the letter and spirit of RTI Act intentional or otherwise which is a great hit to the information seekers. They told that since the State Information Commission has been rendered defunct by the government paralysing its whole control on the government functionaries and University of Jammu is one of those which do not care at all to the requests of RTI activists.

15 yrs on, Fraud victims continue to crave for justice

'INVESTIGATIVE AGENCIES HAND-IN-GLOVE WITH ACCUSED, HANDOVER CASE TO CBI, VO'

CE BUREAU JAMMU:

The victims of Non-banking Finance Company run by Bashir Ahmad Manhas, son of Mohd Adam Khan of Surankote under the name and style of "United Endowment Ltd" at Surankote, had alleged that the concerned company has duped them with fake promises of doubling their amount. The victims also demanded handing over of the case to CBI and Vigilance Organization (VO), as Crime Branch police is 'Hand in gloves' with the accused.

According to document, in possession of citizen Eye said that since the accused belonged to a very reputed fam-

ily, the locals reposed faith in him and deposited huge amount in the shape of Fixed Deposits (FDs), believing that the amount shall be doubled after four years.

"Little less they know that they are being duped and their hard earned money shall be misappropriated," said victims, adding, when accused amassed crores of rupees and assumed that the terms of some FDs have matured, the accused escaped with money and went underground.

Consequently nine cases have been registered at different places which were ultimately transferred to Crime

Branch J&K.

"It is a sorry state of affairs that these cases were haphazardly investigated by different Investigating Officers of Crime Branch. The officials have joined hands with these criminals for vested interests and provided fake reports," alleged victims.

They maintained that the investigation was conducted so badly that four of these reports challaned in the court of law got out rightly dismissed by the Court. The other cases in the court of law are still pending without any charge. Challan of case under FIR 182/2001 registered in Mendhar police

station has been produced recently while the main accused is free.

RTI filed by one Zakir Hussain Shah said that height of the injustice is that the property seized/freeze in these cases are sold with active connivance of Revenue and Crime Branch officials even before production of challans in the court of law.

Even after production of record about the selling of these properties was produced no action was taken by crime branch and these persons had to knock the doors of Court from where necessary orders for registration of case u/s 156 (3) CrPC were issued.

Despite court orders it took

months for registration of case under FIR No. 67/2015 U/S 420/406/120-B RPC 5(11) of Corruption Act P/S Crime Branch Jammu. Months have lapsed after registration of case but no investigation is being carried out and these sufferers are crying for justice.

They have requested the Governor for issuance of necessary directions to the concerned authorities as the Police itself are involved in the same and there are apprehensions that the case shall never be investigated property and vigorously by them.