

A LEGAL PERSON WITH SPIRITUAL MIND

PANDIT BANSI DHAR NEHRU



The firm foundation of the Mughal empire in India was laid by a Uzbek Mongol warrior Zahiruddin Mohammand Babar, who was born in 1483 in a tiny village Andijan on the border of Uzbekistan and Krigistan after defeating the Sultan of Delhi Ibrahim Lodi in the battle of Panipat which took place in 1526, The Rajputs soon thereafter under the command of Rana Sanga challenged the authority of Babar, but were badly routed in the battle of Khanwa near Agra on 16th March, 1527.

Babar with a big army then went upto Bihar to crush the revolt of Afgan chieftains and on the way his commander in chief Mir Baqi destroyed the ancient Ram Temple at Ayodhya and built a mosque at that spot in 1528. Babar than returned back to Agra where he died on 26th December 1530 dur t o injuries received in the battle with Afgans in 1529 at the Ghaghra's is basin in Bihar.

After Babar's death his son Nasiruddin Humanyu ascended the throne, but he had to fight relentless battels with various rebellious chieftains for fight long years. The disgruntled Afghan chieftains found Sher Shah Suri as an able commander who defeated Humanyu in the battle of Chausa in Bihar and assumed power at Delhi in 1543. Sher Shah Suri died on 22nd May 1545 due to injuries suffered in a blast after which the Afghan power disintegrated.

Hymanyu then taking full advantage of this fluid political situation again came back to India with reinforcements from Iran and reoccupied the throne at Delhi after defeating Adil Shah in the second battle of Panipat in 1555. Humanyu died after a year later in 1556 due to a great fall from the wooden staircase of his personal library and was succeeded by his son Jalaluddin Akbar.

Akbar though illiterate was very shrewd and cunning ruler. To contain the military power of Rajputs on his side he married Harkhu Bai a Rajput princess who was the daughter of Bharmmal the chieftain of Amer principality. Akbar conquered Kashmir in 1586 by first inviting its Sultan Yusuf Shah Chak to Agra for talks and then putting him in detention. Akbar for the first time divided the country into 12 provinces and appointed their governors for their effective administration. Akbar died in 1605 and was succeeded by his son Nooruddin Jahangir who had a great fascination for Kashmir which is reflected by the following Persian Couplet by him.

**Agar firdaus bar rue zaminast
Haminasto haminasto haminast**

Zahangir died in Kashmir in 1627 after which his son Shahabuddin Shahjahan ascended the throne but his son mohiuddin Aurangzeb created a new precedent in Mughal history when he deposed his father Shahjahan from the throne and put him under detention in the Agra Fort and became emperor in 1658. Aurangzeb was a ruthless ruler and the decline of the Mughal empire started soon after his death in 1707.



It is interesting to note here that the emperor Shahjahan's historic dagger 40.8cms long including scabbard with a 20.5cms long blade having a curving watered steel and tapering blade swollen at the tip double edged with a central ridge, gold koftgiri decoration on either side below the forte consisting of a cartouche bearing two long narrow apparels was acquired by a famous Belgium industrialist and antique conector Tesenfans (1920-1999) was auctioned by London based Bonham a rare Mughal artifact for Rs.3.92 crores on 8th April 2008.

Here it should be kept in mind that the Mughal emperors had a great weakness for women. They used to maintain very big harems containing innumerable concubines belonging to different castes, creeds, bloods and breeds. Whenever they use to go on any battle front they were always accompanied by a big contingent of their Begums and selected tawaifs for their recreation.

So after the death of Aurangzeb the war games started for the succession in the Mughal hierarchy. Shah Alam I who ascended the throne in 1707 killed by younger brothers Azam Shah and Khan Baksh around 1710 besides making peace with the various chiefs of Rajputana like

Ajit Singh of Jodhpur, Bijay Singh of Amer, Raja Durga Das, Jai Singh of Jaipur and Amar Singh of Mewar to consolidate his position and power.

Shah Alam I who ascended throne at the age of 63 years died in 1713 making way for Jahandar Shah to take up the reins of administration but he was a great casanova who used to pass most of his time in the company of a tawaif. Lal Kunwar instead of looking after the administration of the country properly so his authority was challenged by prince Farrukhsiyar whose father Azam Shah was killed by Shah Alam I to usurp the throne. Farrukhsiyar after taking help from Abdullah Khan of Allahabad and Hussain Ali Khan of Patna then in January 1713 killed Jahandar Shah and his son Azizuddin Shah and declared himself as an emperor.

Farrukhsiyar then in 1716 paid a visit to Srinagar to seek support from Kashmiri noble men like Inayat Ullah Kashmiri, Mohammad Mrad and Pandit Raj Kaul. Inayatullah was raised to the status of a mansabdar of 4000 and was made an imperial revenue minister. Farrukhsiyar was very much impressed by Pt. Raj Kaul and his command over the Persian language and asked the latter to come over to Delhi.

That is how Pt. Raj Kaul a resident of Habba Kadal, who was born around 1695 came to Delhi in 1716 with his family members from Kashmir on the invitation of Farrukhsiyar who made the former a teacher for the royal family members.

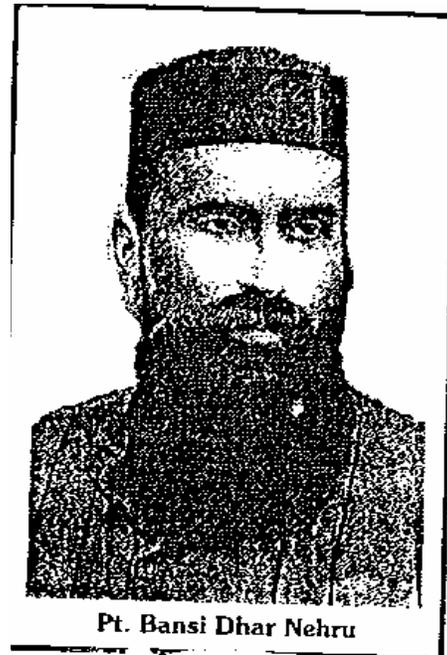
The Mughal emperor Farrukhsiyar allotted a decent haveli to Pt. Raj Kaul for living on the bank of a canal which used to bring water from the river Yamuna to the Red Fort for royal members and also granted a jagir to Pt. Raj Kaul to maintain his economic status. Pt. Raj Kaul due to his closeness with the emperor soon started wielding a considerable influence in the Mughal court and developed good contacts in the administrative hierarchy. So that way Pt. Raj Kaul established himself very well at Delhi and led a life of fulfillment without much trouble.

Farrukhsiyar soon became a victim of political conspiracies and machinations in power struggle. On the instigation of Mohammad Shah the Afghan soldiers dragged out Farrukhsiyar from his harem when was having nice time with his concubines first blinded him in February 1719 and finally killed him on 25th April 1719. Mohammad Shah then ascended the throne, who also had a great weakness for women due to which he was nick named as Rangiley.

In this fast changing political scenario Pt. Raj Kaul somehow succeeded in maintaining his position and social status. He had a son Pt. Vishwa Nath Kaul, who was born around 1725 at Delhi. After completing his studies at the Persian College, Delhi, Pt. Vishwa Nath Kaul had no problem in getting a good job in the Mughal court due to the connections of his father. He had three sons Sahib Ram, Mansa Ram and Tika Ram. Since all these three brothers used to live on the bank of a canal which is called Nehar in the Persian language so they started writing Nehru as their surname to have a separate identity of their family.

Pt. Sahib Ram Nehru was born around 1755 at Delhi. He had his education in the Persian College which was near the Ajmeri Gate at that time. He had a son Ram Narain Nehru, who migrated to Ambala for better job prospects. Some of his descendants are now living in Ambala, Meerut, Dehradun and Lucknow.

Pt. Mansa Ram Nehru was born around 1765 at Delhi. He had his education in the Persian College, Delhi. He had a son Pt. Laxmi Narain Nehru. But unfortunately not much known about Pt. Tika Ram Nehru who was born around 1767 at Delhi and his descendants although a lot of effort was made to trace out this branch of the Nehru family.



The British after the Anglo Maratha war (1803-1805) in which Marathas were completely routed by the British troops under Lord Lake had full control over the administration of Delhi. The powers of the Mughal emperor Akbar Shah II were considerably reduced and were confined within the four walls of the Red Fort so Pt. Laxmi Narain Nehru who was born around 1775 thought it prudent to take up job with the East India Company and became its Vakil to look after its interests at Delhi.

Pt. Laxmi Narain Nehru had a son Pt. Ganga Dhar Nehru who was born in 1827 at Delhi. Pt. Ganga Dhar Nehru had his education in Delhi College and was a classmate of Pt. Radha Kishan Sapru, Pt. Bishambhar Nath Sahab and Pt. Swaroop Narain Haksar there. He was a stout and brave person. He was a good horseman and fencing expert. Due to these qualities the last Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar (1837-1858) appointed Pt. Ganga Dhar Nehru as a Kotwal of Delhi around 1845. He was married with Indrani who was the daughter of Pt. Shanker Nath Zutshi of Bazaar Sita Ram employed in the Mughal court as calligrapher to write royal decrees in good handwriting.

When the Mutiny broke out in 1857 and the British troops under the command of Hodson deposed the Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar and kept him under detention in a small dingy cell of the Red Fort before sending him to Rangoon in Burma. Pt. Ganga Dhar Nehru then along with his family members consisting of his two sons Bansi Dhar and Nand Lal their two wives and his daughters Patrani and Maharani migrated from Delhi to Agra. Pt. Ganga Dhar Nehru's third and youngest son Pt. Moti Lal Nehru was not born till then. As both Patrani and Maharani were very fair and beautiful the British troops intercepted thinking that they were taking the European girls with them. Pt. Nand Lal Nehru then saved the ugly situation as he had some knowledge of the English language to explain his position to the British sergeant otherwise all of them would have landed in great trouble. Pt. Ganga Dhar Nehru died at Agra in February 1861 at the age of only 34 years. He was survived by his two sons Bansi Dhar and Nand Lal besides his two daughters Patrani and Maharani and his wife Mrs. Indrani Nehru. Pt. Ganga Dhar Nehru's third and youngest son Pt. Moti Lal Nehru was a posthumous child who was born three months after the death of his father on 6 May 1861 at Agra.

Pt. Ganga Dhar Nehru's elder daughter Patrani was married to Pt. Dwarika Nath Thakru of Kashmiri Mohalla, Lucknow. Later on this Thakru family shifted to Naryalwali Galli in Aminabad. The other daughter Maharani was married with Pt. Lalji Prasad Zutshi Lahore. Her daughter in law Mrs. Lado Rani Zutshi (1882-1968) became a great freedom fighter and used to live in George Town, Allahabad after the partition of the country in 1947.

Pt. Ganga Dhar Nehru's second son Pt. Nand Lal Nehru was born on 1845 at Delhi. He had his schooling in Hindu College, Delhi. To sustain the family after the death of his father he became Dewan of Khetri a small principality in Rajputana. He remained there for about ten years. After the death of Khetri's ruler some serious differences cropped up over succession to the throne between Pt. Nand Lal Nehru and the British Political Agent of Rajputana due to which Pt. Nand Lal Nehru left his job and came to Agra to start his legal practice at the Sadre Dewani Adalat there. He then shifted to Allahabad around 1872 to start his legal practice at the High Court. He took a rented house in the Meerganj locality in the neighbourhood of the famous courtesan Jaddan Bai and started living there with his family. Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru was born in the same house on 14 November 1889.

Pt. Nand Lal Nehru was married around 1856 with Nand Rani the daughter of Pt. Ram Nath Taimni whose ancestor was Pt. Bishan Nath Taimni as shawl merchant of Sopore in Kashmir, who came to Lucknow around 1780 and built Resham Wali Kothi at Chaupatian. It should be noted here that all the Taimnis are the descendants of Pt. Bishan Nath Taimni.

Pt. Nand Lal Nehru died suddenly in 1887 in the prime of his youth after his wife Mrs. Nand Rani Nehru became a mental wreck. She lost all interest in life and became bed ridden. She subsequently died around 1910 and as per her wish her last rites were performed by the saints of Jhusi.

Pt. Nand Lal Nehru had five sons Bihari Lal, Mohal Lal, Shyam Lal, Brij Laj and Om Kishan Lal besides a daughter Brij Mohini who was married with Pt. Janki Nath Sharga a cousin of my grand father Rai Bahadur Pt. Shaym Manohar Nath Sharga the then district and sessions judge and a traditional Wasiqedar of Oudh.

Bihari Lal Nehru was married with Kishan Rani (Tejwanti) the daughter of Pt. Maharaj Kishan Tankha of Hardoi. He had a son Manohar Lal Nehru and three daughters Leelawati married to Pt. Raj Nath Gurtu, Kalawati married to Pt. Triloki Nath Madan of Srinagar and Sheila.

Mohan Lal Nehru established the Allahabad Law Journal Press. He was married with Kamla the daughter of Rai Bahadur Pt. Har Prasad Oar of Kashmiri Mohalla Lucknow. Some writers confuse this 'senior Mrs. Kamla Nehru nee Dar who studied in Kashmiri Mohalla Girls College with the junior Mrs. Kamla Nehru nee Kaul who was the wife of Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru.

Mohan Lal Nehru had a son Ratan Kumar Nehru and a daughter Roop Kumari who was married with Pt. Harihar Nath Wanchoo.

Shyam Lal Nehru was married with Uma who I am told was the daughter of Pt. Manmohan Nath Hukku of Agra. He had a son Capt. Anand Kumar Nehru and a daughter.

Shyam Kumari who married Jameel Khan. Capt Anand Kumar Nehru was in the British Indian Army whose son Arun Kumar Nehru was the Minister for internal security in the Rajiv Gandhi Government.

Brij Lal Nehru became Finance Minister of Maharaja Pratap Singh of Jammu and Kashmir state. He married with Rameshwari the daughter of Raja Nerendra Nath Raina Chhijballi of Labore. He had two sons Brij Kumar Nehru I.C.S. and Balwant Kumar Nehru. Brij Kumar Nehru was India's High Commissioner in London and then Governor of Jammu and Kashmir state.

Dr. Kishan Lal Nehru after doing his M.B.Ch.B. from University of Edinburgh became Superintendent of King George's Medical College, Lucknow. He was married with Shivarjwati the daughter of Pt. Jagat Narain Mulla a famous criminal lawyer of Lucknow.

Pt. Ganga Dhar Nehru's third son Pt. Moti Lal Nehru was born on 6th May 1861 at Agra. He was not a serious student during his school days. He around 1881 did his matriculation from the Government High School, Kanpur. He then cleared the Pleader's examination of the Allahabad High Court and started his legal practice in 1883 at Kanpur under Pt. Prithvi Nath Chak. Pt. Moti Lal Nehru then shifted to Allahabad in 1886 to assist his elder brother. He became a well known lawyer of Allahabad very soon. He went to England in 1895 but on his return to Allahabad he did not perform any Prayashchit as he was initially a completely westernized person with no faith in Indian dogmas. He was a regular visitor to our haveli upto 1920, but when he came into contact with Mahatma Gandhi and jumped into the freedom movement he became an entirely

changed person. He stopped visiting our place as my grandfather was a judge and a loyal British officer.

Pt. Moti Lal Nehru had a roaring legal practice and was the richest Kashmiri Pandit of Allahabad. Big Zamindars, Taluqdars, Rajas and Maharajas generally used to be his clients. He was a very important national figure and one of the shining stars of our freedom movement. In the fag end of his life he developed some serious liver ailment. He was admitted in King George's Medical College, Lucknow where he breathed his last on 6th February 1931. His body was then taken by car by his son Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru from Lucknow to Allahabad for cremation.

Pt. Moti Lal Nehru married twice. His first wife was Bhonashuri Nagu, who was the daughter of Pt. Prithvi Nath Nagu of Kashmiri Mohalla, Lucknow. She died quite young during child birth. Incidentally Bhonashuri Nagu's younger sister Jwalashri Nagu who was the first wife of famous Urdu poet of Lucknow Pt. Brij Narain Chakbast also died quite young during child birth. Pt. Moti Lal Nehru's second wife was Swaroop Rani who was the sister of Rai Bahadur Prem Nath Thussu of Lahore. Mr. Swaroop Rani Nehru died on 10th January 1938 at Allahabad. Her sister Senapati was married with Pt. Mohan Krishna Kaul of Kashmiri Mohalla, Lucknow whose son Brij Krishna Kaul compiled two volumes of Bahar-e-Gulshan-e-Kashmir containing life history of Kashmiri Pandit poets.

Pt. Moti Lal Nehru had two sons Jawahar Lal and Hira Lal who died quite young due to smallpox besides two daughters Swaroop Kumari (Vijay Laxmi) married to Ranjit Pandit and Krishna married to G.P. Hutheesing. Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru after completing his studies in England and becoming a barrister was married in 1916 in Sheesh Mahal of the Haksar family in Bazaar Sita Ram, Delhi with Kamla the daughter of Pt. Jawahar Mal Kaul who was the real son of Dewan Kishan Lal Atal, but given in adoption to Pt. Bishambhar Nath Kaul of Hardoi. Dewan Kishan Lal Atal died in 1920 due to sun stroke while boarding a Tonga at the Charbagh railway station. He was coming from Delhi to Lucknow to meet his sister Mrs. Shyam Rani Sharga living in Kashmiri Mohalla who was my great grandmother. The Kanyadaan of Mrs. Kamla Nehru was performed by her uncle Pt. Arjun Nath Atal as the marriage in the same Gotra is not allowed in Hindus. Mrs. Kamla Nehru died on 28th February 1936 at Vienna. Her mother Mrs. Rajpati Kaul died in 1949 due to brain haemorrhage.

Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru became the first Prime Minister of the country in 1947. He was a champion of non aligned movement. He was a great visionary who laid the firm foundations of modern democratic India. He was one of the top ranking political leaders of the world. To write anything about him will be like showing a lamp to the sun.

Pt. Ganga Dhar Nehru's eldest son Pt. Bansi Dhar Nehru was born in 1843 at Delhi. After his schooling in the Hindu College at Delhi, he was taken in the judicial service by the British and was made a Munsif. He then started living separately from the other members of the Nehru clan

in his own make believe world. Due to his hardwork and devotion to duty he gradually went up the ladder and retired as the subordinate judge of Agra in 1895.

Pt. Bansi Dhar Nehru was married around 1850 with Anandi Shruji the daughter of a wealthy landlord Pt. Badri Nath Kao of Kashmiri Mohalla, Lucknow whose ancestor Pt. Bholu Nath Kao was occupying some high post in the court of Nawab Asafud-Daula of Oudh. His descendant Pt. Rameswar Nath Kao was the founder director of the intelligence agency R.A.W. and played a key role in Indo Pak war of 1971 during the tenure of Mrs. Indira Gandhi as the Prime Minister of the country.

Pt. Bansi Dhar Nehru was a highly religious, orthodox and superstitious person. He used to take his meals all alone on the wooden plank in the kitchen where no body was allowed not even his children. He had a great faith in the traditional Kashmiri rituals. After his retirement from the active government service he started living with his in-laws in Kashmiri Mohalla, Lucknow. He had a keen interest in astrology so the members of the community used to come to his place with their bad forward person believing in very high moral values.

Pt. Bansi Dhar Nehru had a spiritual bent of mind so he used to prefer to spend his time in isolation. That is why he was not very social person. He used to read religious texts to pass his time. In the fag end of his life he almost led a life of a recluse. He went to Kasauli in 1913 perhaps to rejuvenate his failing health where he died. His last rites were performed by his youngest brother Pt. Motilal Nehru on 31st May 1913 at Solan who took Mrs. Khemawati Muttoo the daughter Lucknow with him for certain rituals.

Pt. Bansi Dhar Nehru had three sons Kunwar Bahadur Nehru, Raj Bahadur Nehru and Dr. Shri Shridhar Kailaswati married to Pt. Tribhuwan Nath Tikku of Kanpur, Bilaswati with Pt. Brij Krishna Aga the owner of Kashmiri Hotel Kanpur and Khemawati with Rai Bahadur Pt. Harihar Nath Muttoo of Lucknow who was the first Indian to become an Income Tax Commissioner in the British period. Mrs. Khemawati Muttoo's son Pt. Rameswar Nath Muttoo was the first Kashmiri to become the independent India in 1969.

Pt. Bansi Dhar Nehru's eldest son Pt. Kunwar Bahadur Nehru got an employment in Lahore so he shifted his base there. He was married with Laxmi Rani the daughter of Pt. Hariday Narain Dar of Lucknow. He had three sons Shanti Dhar Nehru, Dheeraj Dhar Nehru and Santosh Dhar Nehru, besides a daughter Krishna who was married with Dwan Brahma Nath Madan the son of Raja Gyan Nath Madan of Lahore.

Shanti Dhar Nehru was born in 1901. After his studies he became an Income Tax inspector. He married quite late in life 1940s. His wife Saraswati was the daughter of Pt. Amar Nath Bakaya of Kashmiri Mohalla, Lucknow. Shanti Dhar Nehru had some property in Bazaar Sita Ram, Delhi as well. He became critically ill in 1963 and was admitted in King George's Medical College, Lucknow for treatment where he died. He had no issue so my cousin Pt. Hari Mohan Nath Sharga helped his widow Mrs. Saraswati Nehru in performing the last rites of the deceased. A

year later while living in Rani Katra, Lucknow in a rented house Mrs. Saraswati Nehru was murdered in 1964 for money by some robber.

Santosh Dhar Nehru due to some differences in the family ran away from his home around 1926 as a matriculate. He landed in Kanpur where he married a local Brahmin girl. This Brahmin woman bore a son Rajendra Kumar Nehru and a daughter Sheela who was married to Dr. A. N. Srivastava of London. Rajendra Kumar Nehru had a steel casting factory in Kanpur. He married a local Sikh girl, Mulawant Kaur the daughter of Sardat Harnam Singh Sarna of Rawalpindi (Pakistan). He died in 2001. He had a son Sudhir Nehru besides two daughters Preeti and Nita. Now his family lives at 104/435, P-Road Kanpur 208012.

Dheeraj Dhar Nehru was mentally unstable. He used to perform one ritual after another all the time so he could not marry. Not much is known about him.

Pt. Bansi Dhar Nehru's second son Raj Bahadur Nehru was married with Laxmi a K.P. girl of Lahore. He had a son Maharaj Bahadur Nehru and a daughter, Munni (Dhanrajpati) married to Pt. Kashi Prasad Munshi of Hardoi. Maharaj Bahadur Nehru had a shop Bahadur and Co. at Allahabad, which was financed by his grand uncle Pt. Moti Lal Nehru.

Pt. Bansi Dhar Nehru's youngest son Dr. Shri Shridhar Nehru was born on 17th November, 1888. He did his Ph.D under a Nobel Laureate Prof. Phillip Lenard from the Heidelberg University of Germany in 1911 and then passed the prestigious I.C.S. examination of that era from London in 1913, but he could not achieve something big in life as his cousin Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru and his father Pt. Moti Lal Nehru were playing a leading role in the freedom movement against the British. So that way Dr. Shri Shridhar Nehru became a "victim of political circumstances and was never in the good books of the British. Dr. S.S. Nehru was married in 1914 with Raj Dulari the daughter of Pt. Kailas Prasad Kitchlu who was the first Indian to become the director of instructions at Allahabad. Dr. S.S. Nehru died as a frustrated man on 22nd May 1965 at Kasauli in Himachal Pradesh. His wife Mrs. Raj Dulari Nehru died much later on 14th November 1991 at Allahabad at the ripe age of 94 years. They had no issue.

Now Mrs. Sonia Gandhi an Italian by birth is carrying forward the legacy and values of this famous Nehru Gandhi family which gave three Prime Ministers to the country setting an example for others to follow. Theodore Roosevelt has very rightly said that power undirected by high purpose spells calamity, and high purpose by itself is utterly useless if the power to put it into effect is lacking.



Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Mrs. Krishna, Pt. J. L. Nehru, Chandra Lekha, Mrs. Vijayalaxmi Pandit.



Pt. J. L. Nehru lighting the cigarette of British deputy commissioner's wife