

CHAPTER — VI

Before discussing the details out of the above referred books I would like to give some of the references about the authenticity; of the claim of the Old Pujari of the temple in 1968 that the place has ancient and an important place in origin and was visited by Lord Rama, followed by the Raja Prikshit the son of great Mahabharat war hero Abhimannue, who was the son of Arjuna and that Surp Yagya was conducted by Raja Parikshit's son Maharaja Janamejaya on the spot and that the havan kund was still existing.

Dr. Purushottam Lal Bhargava a leading Historian and Indologist, a profound scholar of Sanskrit and Ancient Indian History in his book "Founders of India's Civilization" has written on the life of ten great men of Pre-Budha period. The book was published in 1909 by Asian Humanities Press, Berkley, California, U.S.A. I have mentioned earlier that the area around Mohammadpur has lots of history hidden and buried hence the history of Mohammadpur will not be complete without some details of the surrounding areas. What I am writing herein after, is necessary to know the ancient historical importance of the area.

Chapter two of P. L. Bhargava's book talks about the ancient king "Bharata" after whose name the India is known as "Bharat". This Bharata was the son of Dushyanta and Shakuntala and not the son of Raja Dasharatha and Kaikayee known as Bhrat. P. L. Bhargava writes that the, "People who call themselves 'Aryan'" and whose religion and culture have been inherited both by; the Hindus and Parsees. This P.L. Bhargava says, probably because both Arya Samaji Hindus as well as Parsees worship fire, Aryans crossed over to the East of the river Sindh or Indus and settled in its valley at a date not later than 2600 B. C." He further mentions that Manu was the leader of the Aryans who crossed over the Sindh and settled in the valley. Manu along with three others, i.e. Bhrgu, Atri and Kasyapa laid the foundation of Aryan civilization in India. Various priests out of the Bhrgu, Atri and Kasyapa of Aryan races settled in the Jungles throughout India, even in the areas, which were out side the areas ruled by Aryan and were under the control of the Dravidians beyond Krukchetra and up to Kannyakumari. They had constant conflict with the local Adivasis and Dravidians.

Bharata was the son of Dusyanta and Shakuntala who were from the future dynasty of Manu. Infact the ruling dynasty came from future generation of Manu. Other caste claiming heritage of Aryans came from other three, Bhrgu, Atri and Kasyapa. The Sanatan Dharma was developed from Aryans. Bharata was a pious king, a great conqueror and a man of high principles. He made conquests both in the East and

West of his kingdom which was on the bank of River Sarasvati. He is the first recorded Aryan king who carried his arms beyond the Yamuna River up to the river Ganga. The Aryans accordingly captured entire Northern and Eastern part of India and pushed the Adivasis and Dravidians, to Southward. These Adivasis such as Bheels, Sivries etc. used to live in the vast jungles of the country and those living in the areas under the control of Aryans were treated as slaves by the Aryans and treated them like Achools (untouchable) and made them to live in the most inhuman conditions. Those living out side the areas beyond the control of Aryans were termed as Rakchasas. Shri J.L.Mehta lecturer in the Dept, of History, Punjab University Chandigarh, in his book "Advanced Study in the History of Medieval India" Volume I, page 44, describes this position as: "The Hindus displayed conservatism and narrow-mindedness in their outlook,"

The evils of caste barrier and untouchability amongst the Hindus are the creation of Aryan i.e. Caste Hindus. To overcome such evils lord Buddha introduced the concept of Budhism. But during second A.D. Adi Shankrachary came up with greater vengeance against Budhism and reestablished the principal of Sanatan Dharma. Much later during 7th & 8th Century A.D. Muslim saints came in India and inculcated among such down trodden people the confidence of being normal human being. The Muslim saints followed by European Missionaries found the condition in India very conducive to spread their religion. This encouraged these down trodden people, suppressed for centuries and generation after generation to adopt Islam followed by Christianity to live in dignity. But the Caste Hindus, named the Muslim converts as "Malaich". Unfortunately even the Muslim elite particularly those who migrated from Afghanistan, Iran or Arab countries adopted from Hinduism the same caste barrier and did not treat the converts equal to them nor in day to day dealings in terms of Islamic principles. Those Muslims who migrated in India from Afghanistan, Persia and Arab countries treated themselves as upper strata of Muslim community. They did not assimilate the local converts out of these achools of non Aryan races, as per the teachings of Islam except when these converts are in Mosques for performing Namaz But in day to day and social dealings these migratory Muslims did not treat the converts from low cast Hindus equal and avoided marriage of their children with their children. Besides low caste Hindus lacs of Rajputs/Chattaries Brehmins adopted Islam. Even the Rajputs/Chattiries, Brahmins and other upper caste Hindus who adopted Islam could not shed the caste barrier a legacy of Hinduism even after adopting Islam. The convert Muslims out of lover castes became class of its own in Muslim community of India. This was the gift of Hindu culture adopted by the Muslim elite not only those who had converted from upper caste of Hindu community but even

those who had migrated from Arab, Persia, Turkish and Afghanistan. As for conversion to Islam both upper caste as well as lower caste Hindus adopted Islam but in Christianity only lower caste Hindus adopted Christianity. The European missionaries after converting the poor and low caste Hindus took proper care not only to educate them but also to provide them with jobs because by that time British had captured the power and were ruling the Country. However, even the British did not marry their children with the children of Indian convert Christians. The Indian Christians were not treated by British Nationals equal to them. They were allowed to merge in Churches but socially were not acceptable as equals to them. Very few British girls may have married to Indian Christians. The British male did retain certain Indian women under living relationship. The children born out such relation became another class of its own and were called Anglo Indian.

Dr. P. L. Bhargava in Chapter eleven of his book devoted to Valmiki, mentions that Valmiki was from the lineage of Bhrgu hence was of Aryan's dynasty. At page 84 he writes:-

“Once while wandering near his hermitage on the bank of river Tamsa Valmiki noticed a pair of Herons (A large bird with a long neck and long legs that lives near water) singing sweetly. Suddenly a fowler belonging to the tribe of Nisadas shot the male Herons which fell dead on the ground sweltering in his blood. Valmiki deeply touched by the fate of the innocent bird and piteous condition of the bereaved female involuntarily uttered these words: ‘O, Nisada, may thy tribe not attain stability for time eternal, since thou hast killed one, of a pair of herons infatuated with love for his mate.’”

According to Dr. Habeebullah Nisada's out of Aryans when converted to Islam were known as Julahas.

Since the hermitage of Valmiki was at the bank of Tamsa (Tauns) River thus the hermitage of Valmiki was in the area where Azamgarh district came in-to being. Tamsa River which originates from Akbarpur Town of Faizabad district just near the border of Azamgarh and flows through Azamgarh District and merges with Ganges immediately after Azamgarh's Eastern border in the District of Ballia, hence the hermitage of Valmiki must have been some where in the area which is now Azamgarh District.

Dr. P. L. Bhargava has devoted chapter seven to Lord Rama. From page 47 he narrates the details of passage of his Vanvasa (exile). He mentions that once it was finally decided that Ram, Sita and Lkshmana will go in exile (vanvas) the King Dasaratha's most trust worthy minister, (wazeer) Sumanatra brought a chariot to take them to an unknown destination out of the boundary of Ayodhya kingdom as

well as that of its feudatory Rajas. No details of the journey from Ayodhya up to the point they reached a small town called Sarangverapura at the bank of Ganga is available. It is also not found anywhere as to how many days, or months it took them to reach Sarangverapura from Ayodhya. This town was out of King Dashratha's Kingdom but was under the kingdom of Guha who was the leader of tribe Nisadas. Guha was one of the feudatories of Dashratha. Upto this point the Wazeer Sumantra accompanied Rama, Sita and Lakshmana. Here Rama asked Sumantra to return to Ayodhya and take proper care of Raja Dashratha. Thereafter they crossed over the Ganga by a boat and reached at a town, then called Vatsa. This town Vatsa was across Ganges but North/ West of Sangam, because from this point they went to Sangam. This town Vatsa was across Ganges but must have been North/West of Sangam because Lord Ram reached Sangam after crossing the Ganges. The town Vatsa must have been somewhere North of Allahabad between Ganges and Jamuna rivers because they had to cross Jamuna after visiting Sangam to reach Chitrakut.

Lord Rama was very particular to seek blessings from Rishis, Munis and Gurus hence the belief that he visited Durbasa at the bank of River Majhui on the border of Faizabad and Azamgarh, then to Awantikapuri that too in Azamgarh, cannot be ruled out. Besides Rishi Valmiki's hermitage being at the bank of Tamsa (Tons) River flowing through Azamgarh makes it more reliable assertion that Lord Ram must have passed through this area. When Raja Ram discarded Devi Sita, from his palace (while she was pregnant), she was provided shelter by Valmiki in his hermitage which was at the bank of river Tamsa i.e. in Azamgarh. That means, Lav and Kush were born and brought-up in the area through which the Tamsa River was flowing in the hermitage of Valmiki, i.e. in Azamgarh. It also shows that it was the Dharti of Azamgarh where the Lav and Kush captured the Ashvamegh Yagya Horse circulated by King Ram meaning that Lov and Kush did not submit to the subjugation of King Ram and challenged his authority over the area. This also shows that, those born or lived at the Dharti of Azamgarh which includes Mohammadpur always strived for their independence since pre-historic age. Lov and Kush challenged the authority of King Rama. Similarly, the people of Azamgarh did not easily submitted to the subjugation of Moghals and British as well. Even after the independence of the country, they are mostly in opposition. It also confirms that Devi Sita considered the Dharti of Azamgarh so pious and decided to make it her permanent abode, as according to Hindu Mythology it was on her prayer the Dharti took her in its lap. The town of Nizamabad existed much prior to its naming as Nizamabad. It was considered a pious Hindu

Pavitra 'usthan' in pre-historic period. There is a famous ancient temple called 'Sitla Devi' in Nizamabad and the town is at the bank of Tamsa River. It is just possible that Devi Sita took the abode under ground at the same spot.

The greatness of the Dharti of Azamgarh has been well described by Janab Iqbal Khan Suhail, the poet, of Badhadia Village in the following couplet:

“Iss Khitta-e-Azamgarh pe magar faizan-e-tajalli hai yeksar”

“Jo zarreh yehan se uthta hai woh naiyare-taban hota Hai”

The grand father of Iqbal Khan Suhail had the guts to have given shelter to Babu Kunwar Singh of Jagdishpur Bihar during his movement against British in 1858, not only on the risk of his family but the entire village. Babu Kunwar Singh along with the people of Mohammadpur dismantled the upper layer of the old bridge of Manghai river in Mohammadpur so that British forces may not be able to reach Azamgarh easily. At pages 1342 & 1343 Amrish Misra writes, that inspite of the fact that Pulwar Rajputs were not basically fighting people but these Rajputs and Muslims living in the villages of Azamgarh from west, south and north blocked all roads for British. The Rajput and Muslims living in the villages infact helped Kunwar Singh and his paid Army to escape from this region and reach back to the native town Jagdish Pur in Bihar. It was the people of Azamgarh who actually fought against the British to help Kunwar Singh cross over river Ganges at Shivpur in the district of Gazipur. The actual fight was not that of Kunwar Singh versus British but between the people of Azamgarh versus British which was at places under the command of Kunwar Singh till he was able to cross river Ganges. It was due to this reason the British forces under the command of Mark Kerr did not take the route passing from Mohammadpur but from Varanasi came straight to Sarsana (Sarsena village) which is about two miles east of Mohammadpur and about 8 miles south of Azamgarh. It was on 2nd April, 1858. With the support from the people of Azamgarh Kunwar Singh captured Azamgarh City. The British were so much disturbed with the revolt of the people of Azamgarh that beside the forces under the command of Mark Kerr they dispatched Brigadier General Edward Lugard along with 700 Sikh Combine from Lucknow who reached on 14th April 1858 at the bank of River Tamsa about 7 miles west of Azamgarh City but the villagers checked their advancement for few days to give time to Kunwar Singh to crossover the Ganges from Shivpur district Ghazipur to Bihar side so as to reach safely back to his area Jagdishpur. Kunwar Singh was able to

crossover Ganges on 21st April 1858 but in the meantime some British Forces reached the spot and fired while Kunwer Sing's boat was mid Ganges in which his left Arm was bedly injoured and Kunwar Singh had to cut it of and dropped it in the Ganges.

When Begum Hazrat Mahal and Maulvi Ahmedullah Madrasi asked Kunwar Singh to return to Eastern part of U.P. and Western Bihar and fight with British he had only 1000 men in his force. When he reached Azamgarh he was given shelter at the residence of the grand father of Iqbal Khan Suhail, Advocate of Barhadia and was re-enforced with over 3000 men from Azamgarh villages comprising of Muslims and Rajputs. With the help of this force Kunwar Singh attacked at Atraulia then on 26.3.1858 on Azamgarh City. Muslim Populace of villages and Pulwar Rajputs were like Brothers and faught side by side against the British. (Ref. Amrish Misra Paages 1342, 1373 and 1388).

The cordial relations between Muslims and Hindus of the District Azamgarh was so deep rooted that when Muzaffarjahan son of Raja Iradat Jahan re-captured Mahul on 28th June, 1857 the Muslim and Hindu forces combined and together raised the slogan of "Har Har Mahadev" as well as "Allah-ho-Akbar". (Ref. Amrish Misra page 1351). Amrish Misra further writes that in Azamgarh Syeds had very thin population, but Julahas (Noor Baafs) of Azamgarh participated extensively in the revolutionary activities. Their very presence as a body with Rajputs represented the Rajput-Muslim brother-hood. The very presence of Julahas created nervous reactions amongst the British officials. In fact the Nisada tribes of ancient India were the inhabitants of eastern U.P. whose main profession was weaving. They adopted Islam in large numbers because the Aryans treated them as Sudra. After adoption of Islams during Sultanate they were given the title of Noor Baff which later on became Julahas.

Mr Phoolbadan Singh also mentioned in his book, at page 25 that the famous Gauri Shankar Ghat at the eastern end of the city of Azamgarh which is basically was/is used by Hindus for taking bath at the river Tamsa and Pooja at the temples near the Ghat. The Ghat is having saperate enclosure for woman to take bath. Inspite of this the place was used by the revolutionaries for their activities which included Hindus as well as Muslims for secret meetings against British Administration in a Kutia belonging to a Sadhu. This was because the British were always treating Muslims as the main apponent against British Rule hence the meetings in a place known as Hindu worship place was the safest place for such activities against British, this also shows the friendship between Hindus and Muslims of the district. Mr. Phoolbadan Singh

mentioned particularly one such incidence which took place in April 1857 just after Holi festival of the said year.

The meeting between the Rajputs led by Thakur Pargan Singh of Kartarpur, Thakur Harnam Singh of Pardoka and others and the Muslims led by Mr. Rajab Ali of Bamhur with his followers from the villagers such as Sikhthi Shah Mohammadpur, etc. was to take place at Gauri Shankar Ghat of Azamgarh. Rajab Ali and group were delayed in the way and in meantime some one informed the British Collector about this secret meeting who immediately rushed to the place with white police contingent in the area. Those who had already arrived and were sitting in a Kutia of Sadhu escaped by jumping in the river Tamsa and crossed over.

By 30th May 1857 the preparation of revolt started taking momentum specially by the revolutionaries from the villages. The news that five lacs rupees has been brought from the Gourakhpur to Azamgarh and the reserve of Rupees two lacs lying in the treasury of Azamgarh will be transferred to Benaras immediately. The revolutionaries did not want to happen this and had planed to attack the treasury to captures the fund. Bandhu Singh the leader of 17th B.N.I. managed to delay the transfer to the fund. However sensing the truble the British Authorities deputed 13th Horse cavalry along with British Armed to carry the seven lacs fund to Benaras on 3rd of June 1857. The revolutionaries from various villages surrounding Azamgarh city marched towards Azamgarh to capture the funds. Bandhu Singh persuaded his troops of 17 B.N.I. to march immediately and capture those who had already left for Benaras with the funds and caught them near Rani Ki Sarai about six miles south of Azamgarh city and by killing the white soldiers and some commanding officers. My Great Grate Grandfather Neyamatullah and his son Mohammad Naeem Khan who had led a group of young men of the village and marched towards Azamgarh to check the British police who were carrying the funds to Benaras after punishing the certain elements of the Bazar who were acting as informars to the British were persuaded by Subedar Baba to return to the village as the purpose for which they were marching towards Azamgarh city was already achieved and the funds were already captured by Bandhu Singh and groups. Thus the village was saved from being listed as one of the revolutionaries infected village for the British to retaliate and destroy the same.