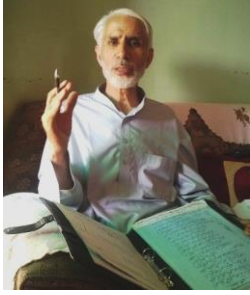


Zareef A Zareef

For Kashmir's struggle for independence, Zareef strongly believes, Kashmir's two more generations can take it to new heights where world will listen to what we say and what we ask for? Those generations will be highly educated and real intellectuals.

ولو با باغوانو نوبهازک شان پيدا کر ~ پھلن گل گنتھ کرن بلبل تھتی سامان پيدا کر



Saima Bhat painstakingly expending her diligent care gives a detailed account of legendary Zareef A Zareef's intellectual prowess, ready wit, and rhythmical satirical poetry in the modern day political strife stricken Kashmir reaching the pinnacle of literary taste. Zareef takes his heart out to boost the morale of his native subjects sharing the brunt of merciless occupational forces. He is an asset of the Kashmiri nation and all agree in unison that Zareef has done Kashmir proud.

Zareef was born on April 17, 1943 in downtown Aial Kadal (Aali Kadal) of Kashmir's capital city Srinagar. He was raised in a middleclass family in a residential accommodation at the base of historical Fort (Haari Parbat) near the area popularly known as Baadshahi Darwaza an entrance leading to the shrine of highly revered Sufi Saint Sultan Arifeen Makhdoom Sahib (rtA).

Zareef inherited the natural gift of poetic nuances and refinement from his father late Ghulam Mohi-ud-din Shah, a shawl embroidery business shop owner, at Pather Masjid in the vicinity of Zaina Kadal also known as 4th bridge. His mother late Mokhta Begum, as



Saima says, was a simple *home maker*.

Saima adds "The artisan workshop of Zareef's father played a highly significant role in the making of Zareef. It was a hub of highly accomplished Hakeems, Sufi saints, poets, and travelling merchants. Zareef has had the pleasure to grow in an environment embodying wisdom and knowledge and holds Khawaja Habibullah Khatar, greatly revered Sufi saint in high esteem and fervently visits his mausoleum to pay obeisance".

Islamia High school in the downtown Razey Kadal (Rajori Kadal) has been Zareef's initial seat of learning; an ardent enthusiast religiously attending seminars, symposiums, debates and annual functions throughout his formative years. His guiding teachers of repute Rahman Rahi and Sattar Ahmed Shahid were instrumental in imparting eloquence of thought and feelings allowing Zareef to express him in a befitting manner.

Saima further writes that Zareef "apart from being an inspiration, an unknown poet played a vital role in his career. Ghulam Ahmed Mir Abid showed him to use imaginative powers and fine tune in writing aptitude; while Hakeem Manzoor an eminent Urdu writer introduced him to great beauty of verse, the profoundness of literature".

His educational achievements include his Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree in Urdu from Aligarh Muslim University. Soon after leaving High School, Zareef was appointed a script writer in the department of information. While serving in the cultural unit of department of information he remained active in organising public shows, dramas, Mushairas and features

on an unparalleled scale in various parts of Kashmir State. His writings were instrumental in evoking greater response from public which helped the department in achieving various goals in promoting the forsaken Kashmiri language.

Zareef expounds his inner self in line with the decades old political situation of his motherland and expressions of a bruised heart brings out words pearled in Kashmiri vocabulary in the following manner:

Kashmiri being the medium of his poetry; his style of writing remained apprehensive and humorous which greatly attracted the masses. Thrust of his poetry has been to portray the social evils to exterminate them by arousing public consciousness. Imbalances in the society, plight of the weaker sections and environmental filth have remained the main themes.

In view of the great contribution to social cause and exemplary contribution for serving the environment Zareef was selected and honoured as Man of the year in 1999 by the board of International Research of the American Biographical Institute. In the annotation Zareef was declared as the best worker in the field of environmental protection and social and literary life. He was also awarded with Ahad Zargar award by Ahad Zargar Memorial Research Foundation in 2009 for his precious research pertaining to less known poets of Kashmir.

Till now Zareef has compiled his 27 essays in his book, *Khabar Togme wanun* inducted in curriculum of Kashmir University and now planning to compile seven books more like a brief introduction about Sufi Poets and their selected poems. Natyaa Sombran (Hamud, Naat, Munajaat, Mankabat), Tehkeeke (Daste' kaar), Kasheeri hienz saazo awaaz, Choklad Ruh, humorous poems and Taaran Garee (swindling, it was published in yearly periodical of a vernacular newspaper and in a continuous form keeps on adding couplets.).

Zareef is also working on another book that is based on spirituality giving credit to a Sufi Saint Khawaja Mohiuddin Nakeeb once came to visit his family and asked for food but to everybody's surprise he offered the food served to little boy Zareef and since then Zareef felt some sort of unease or restlessness and dedicated the part of poetry to the Saint.

Zareef retired from the department as cultural officer and after retirement engaged himself as chairman of Ahad Zargar Memorial Research Foundation and as an adviser for various committees for issues like social work and environment. He has never been oblivious to the political sufferings of his native land under occupation and through his poetic thoughts and inscriptions touched the sensitivities of masses to arouse them from time to time. Zareef once faced imprisonment for three days during the regime of GM Sadiq (Indian imposed government chief minister) who thought Zareef had targeted him in one of his couplets written on the cover page of his book *Ezhaar-e-Haq*.

azadi ka matlab kya,	kashmir chodkey zalim ja,
hum kya chahtein haq insaaf,	baichara, nafrat off,
mehman aayey mahaol saaf,	jeevay jeee bharat pak,
hamsey karley freedom talk	UN walo saamney aawo,
apney wadaey baja laow,	bharat walo ab tum jao,
apney wadoon ko aamlao,	zalim Qaetilo athe´ rath path,

baaraw chu diwan masoom raeth, par zchol poumpur shamhas paeth,
bharat tum sey jhagda kya kashmir chodhkey wapas ja,
kaeshrew haq az kareaw adda zulmas jhagdas di ragda"

His first ever verses as a teenage school boy depict the level of poetic intellectual pursuits when he amazed his schoolmates and all around throwing light on seeking knowledge saying:

arun Gacchi kaadaen tarun nate' gaie lagai karein naas
nabre saasa theailus barun suo gow paezpaeth naeirun pass