

POETRY

Prominent Kohwar poets — III

Gul Nawaz Khaki

By Sher Nawaz Naseem

Gul Nawaz Khaki, a renowned Kohwar poet, was born in 1936, at Singoor, Chitral, and got his early education in his home town. As a government employee he served in many departments but his independent temperament never compromised with the rude and authoritarian attitude of the officials. His heart suffered very much when he noted that how inhumanly subordinates were treated and forced to work, not as a respectable human being, but merely a tormented soul. He maintained high principles and never bowed his head before others for few words of admiration. He quit service in 1975 for this reason and decided to lead a private life at home.

Gul Nawaz is a very sensitive poet. He sees life from different angles, noting its hard realities. He grapples with agony, anguish and sorrows but his strong and invincible courage does not let him surrender. The many ups and downs in his life force him to speak, as a poet, not from his head but from the core of his heart. The following few lines of his poems will perhaps be enough to disclose the world from which he comes:-

اشروؤ طوفانان سوم، اشٹوک کومان
هردير اربانان سوم، اشٹوک کومان
سوم هوستين چھوسى آسوم تان گروان
چھيرو آوانان سوم اشٹوک کومان

"I am playing with the storms of my tears and with the countless desires of my heart."
"I am playing with the remaining edge of my shirt because of collar has been torn out with my own hands."

گهي گانگ گديري، زمانو سوم دمى
بشہ بٹ ماريان سوم گهي غيرنانہ آوا

"Sometimes I am looking mad and sometimes I am wrestling with the billows and whirlpool of stormy rivers."

نہ يہ عالما مزہ، نہ کی آفس تے جھانز
تے ہردی پولى پھيرى جھانز اريان واکرا

"I feel no pleasures in this world nor expect any good of the life hereafter because my vexed heart has no courage to dream of a better world."

When radio Kohwar programme began in 1965 Prof. Israrud-Din called him to contribute to it. He wrote many poems, ghazals and features for the programme, and played the role of an actor in the dramas. He was an artist of good repute and recorded more than a hundred songs; thus becoming known to the public as a croo-



ner. He received tremendous appreciation from the lovers of the "request programme." His ghazals, poems and songs are read and heard with great interest in educated circles.

In 1968, he was appointed by the Border Publicity Organisation, Peshawar to edit Jamhoor-e-Islam Kohwar, the only journal in the Chitrali language. He worked with missionary zeal and spirit and made great efforts to encourage young writers. I remember, when I was in 10th class in 1973, I wrote a short story and it got published. When I went to his office to collect my remuneration, he patted me on the back, and served me with tea and encouragement. It was from that time that my interest to write Kohwar began to grow. He considered it a mission to develop the Kohwar language. By dint of his hard and painstaking work, the Kohwar language has today produced more than one hundred poets and writers of high standard.

Gul Nawaz is a romantic poet, yet deviates from the established pattern. As a poet he believes in the theory of inspiration. Romantics are inspired and write on the spur of the moment. He is unique and matchless in his metre, diction, style, rhyme scheme and language. His poems do not exceed more than fourteen lines. He uses Persian and Urdu words to dress and decorate his poems. The following lines are an example of his simplicity, style and diction:-

داريے انداؤ مہ سور، روزنيکويشارموکو
رنگ يلوغ جھانز غيلوؤ، تہ روشکي قدم کائيمان
چھوچھن گبديان سويديں، ہرديوشرو اوڈودين
خاکي پراؤ ثاروساري، مونا کھيرتہ نم کائيمان

"I have fallen prey to fever and don't ask how I am shivering. Stepping towards you, the colour of my face is like the falling leaf of an apple. There is no need for Khaki to get humidity from the dew because my heart itself is a source which sprays the flowers in the morning."

He again writes:-

پے اوڈ گورک کورک جھي شيرانگارو صفت
ظلالے، پے پھيرو، کيدے پوروانان تو آرو

مہ شوکھور لوى خوبان، نيے تان وعديا روغخي
بيچھان نمور غيچھان تہ مہ قوراپھولان تو آرو

"To burn everything is the main characteristic of fire but let me ask you why you have put to ashes so many innocent moths. My Beloved! You, despite your promise, have covered your inebriated eyes with your tresses (depriving me from a look)."

His poetry is original and subjective. He records his own opinions, suggestions inclinations, and temperament. His descriptions are direct, vivid, graphic and precise. His collections are charged with poetic delicacies and colour. His reflections are profound and appeal to the heart. He knows well the art of creating beauty, novelty and variety by using appropriate words.

تہ ہردی مہ يار، بيروچديار آوانو
تہ ستھو آزار، بيرو بے زار آوانو
لوؤاؤ ہارينہ چہ ساعت کی تہ پشيمان
اٹارسی موخو روشتيو چرديا غبار آوانو

"(In my life) your heart is with me but I am not one of those to be spared your cruelty. When I look at you at the mirror, the estrangement in my heart vanishes with the effect of the light of your moon-like face."

Gul Nawaz is a poet of great repute. It is not possible to cover the whole range of his poetry in a short article like this. His humorous and pleasant character has rallied countless admirers around him. He is an author of a book "Mir-e-Karawan", the first ever written in Kohwar, on the founder of the nation, Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, which was published in 1976. He is also compiling a dictionary in Kohwar language.

In a civilised and cultured world such talented people as Gul Nawaz Khaki are respected, honoured and decorated with medals and provided with financial aid in order to boost their morales to continue their work for a better world, free from exploitation and injustices. But it is unfortunate for Gul Nawaz that there is none to help him at a stage where he is struggling hard for his existence.