



*Hiralal B. Irthwany from Chennai, India is an Expert on Mole Reading, interpreting dreams, foretelling omens and numerology. He teaches the 'Power of Spirituality' as the art and science for harmonious living.*



*He is the producer of Cd Rom & Vcd- "The Legend of Tirupathi", the world's richest temple. He is also the advisor of the Vasthu sastra Cd-Rom, produced by the 7th generations Vasthu sastra master Yuvaraj Souma.*

*He holds a degree in science (Chemistry) from the university of Madras. He has lectured for various organisation in Australia, Indonesia, India and Malaysia. He can be contacted at*

*Hira73@hotmail.com*

*hira5555@yahoo.com*

*He is an author of three books,*

- 1. Secret of Mole Reading*
- 2. Ddeal Married Life*
- 3. Fragrance-A Collection Of Poems*

## SREE JHOOLE LAL

Just as the Kashmiri and Punjabi Hindus were saved by Guru Tegh Bahadur, and this has earned him the name '**Hind ki Chadar**', Jhoole Lal saved the Hindus of Sindh from atrocities of Mirk Shah, and Jhoole Lal has remained "Sindh ki Chadar". Even to this day, every Sindhi is proud to be follower of Jhoole Lal or Odero Lal or Amar Lal or Lal Sain.

It was in tenth century when Arab influence was on the decline that Thatta had a fanatical ruler in Mirk Shah, who ordered all Hindus to embrace Islam. The citizens were bewildered. They gathered en masse on the banks of Sindhu river and prayed to Varuna Devata for succour. There appeared a handsome young man from the river on a chariot. He showed many miracles and saved the people from this cultural genocide. He is believed to have been born in Narasapur to Sri Rattan Rao Luhana and his wife Devaki. This child was born in a silver swing (jhoola or pingha) just like lord Krishna in his childhood. Elsewhere, he is shown with a flowing white beard, like Guru Nanak, but seated on a fish, the river fruit. Let us remember that this great youth leader, saved the Sindhi Hindus a 1000 Years ago. To this day temples are built in his honour and panjas (5 line verses) are sung in his great glory.



**-H.P. ARORA**

Many of our Sindhi's are not aware of the story of Lal Sain and this book will make the younger generation to understand about our rich Sindhi culture and the blessings of Lal Sain on us. We are Proud to be a Sindhi. May the Blessings of Lal Sain Be always on us for generations to come

**-HIRALAL JETHWANY**

## **Life Story of Amar Uderolal Sain**

After many abortive attempts during seventh Century A.D. the Arabs succeeded in establishing the Islamic rule in Sind in the year 712 A.D. When Mohamad Bin Qasim, son-in-law of the Arab Khalifa was able to kill the last Hindu ruler Maharaja DAHARSEN. The Muslim rule in Sind continued for many centuries there after. However by the beginning of tenth century, due to the internal family disputes among the “Khalifas”, the Arab empire started to disintegrate into smaller states and serfdoms and consequently their hold on overseas territories like Sind also weakend. Though the central authority still sent Governors, for lack of backing, they could not keep the local chieives under control and the local chieives started raising their own armies, grabbing land and forming their own pockets of influence; where their writ ruled supreme.

Ultimately in the year 939 A.D. a local chieftain named Mugarab Khan killed the Arab nominated Governor Sahadat Khan and installed himself as the absolute ruler of Sind under the name of Marikhshah. Town of Thatta, on left bank of the river Sindhu, became his capital. He was a cruel man and a religious fanatic who wanted all Hindus to embrace Islam. For this purpose, he started harassing Hindus by imposing heavy tax on them, confiscating their properties on smallest pretext and encouraged Muslims in looting Hindu establishments and abducting Hindu women. He also offered attractive prizes to Maulvies, who converted large number of Hindus to Islam.

Those of the Hindus who were weak and could not stand disgrace, torture and inhuman treatment succumbed to his pressure and did embrace Islam but most of the Hindus resisted. Irritated and irked by the failure of his schemes. Marikh shah and his hard line advisors and Maulvies decided to forcibly convert all Hindus to Islam and thus a Royal order was issued calling upon all

Hindus to get converted within a week's time or face extermination on mass basis. This was the last straw.

The Hindus of Sind, from early Vedic times were the worshipers of Varun Dev, the God of Rivers. As it was believed that the Holy Vedas were written on the banks of river Sindhu (Indus) which flowed north-south almost in the middle of Sind and was the life line of the people of Sind. The river Sindhu was identified with God Varun Dev. The heads of all Hindu Panchayats therefore conferred and decided to pray to God Varun Dev and revoke His blessings in getting over the crisis. Lord Krishna has said in Bhagwat Geeta that when religion is under stress and evil people try to destroy the religious establishment and when my devotees are harassed, I will come to Earth to destroy the evil. This was the time when religion was under real stress and forces of evil appeared bent on destroying the religious establishment.

So all Hindus, young and old, men and women gathered on the banks of the holy Sindhu, offered prayers, performed Yajnas and Havans, chanting Shlokas from holy scriptures and all able bodied people went on indefinite fast without even taking water. This lasted for seven days. On the seventh day a miracle happened. There was an unprecedented movement in water and waves rose high. A circle of bright light appeared in the middle of the river and within the circle was Varun Dev seated on a Crocodile, as was visualized and described in holy scriptures, with his right hand raised in blessings. The Lord spoke *"Be not afraid of your Sultan, I am coming. A child will be born at Nasarpur in the house of Rai Ratan and Ma-Devaki. That will be Me. You go to the Sultan and ask for extension of time for seven days, he will grant it"*, So saying, the Lord disappeared. Hindus were jubilant. They danced, they embraced each other, with tears of joy in their eyes.



The heads of Panchayats went to the Sultan and narrated what had happened. Hardline advisors and Mullahs laughed at them. The Sultan thought it was impossible. God cannot come to earth as a human being. Hindus must be hallucinating or day dreaming. He however, found no harm in granting a week's extension. So he accepted their request. River Sindhu flowed a different course those days. The town of Nasarpur was situated on the right bank of the river. A scene similar to the one that happened at Thatta was seen at Nasarpur as well and soon Mata Devaki gave birth to the child. It was Friday, Dooj, Shukul pakshya of the Hindu month of Chaitra of Vikram Samvat 1007. The child was named **UDAICHAND** by the purohit, but people knowing that he was the incarnation of Varun Dev, started calling him Uderolal or the one who always present nearby.

It did not take long for the news to reach Marikh Shah at Thatta. He was shaken, as Hindus had won the first round. It was no more a matter for laughing. He was genuinely perturbed. He held hurried consultations with his advisors and all these "evil brains" put forward a cruel plan to get the child killed. The chief Minister Yusuf Ahio was to execute the plan. He was immediately despatched to Nasarpur. On reaching Nasarpur Yusuf Ahio went directly to Ratan Rai's house, exchanged greetings and congratulated him on the birth of the son. Then he expressed a desire to see the child so as to convey the Sultan's blessings. Ratan Rai, unsuspectingly took Ahio to the room where child Uderolal was lying in the cradle, leaving Ahio with the child, Ratan Rai went to fetch sweets etc, for the guest as it is customary. Finding the moment opportune, Yusuf Ahio took out from his bag a Rose flower dipped in some poisonous substance and which emitted vapour that could kill a child in a short time when inhaled, without raising any suspicions. While he was about to place the flower near the child's face, the child threw a flying kick in such a way that the flower flew out from Yusuf's hand and landed in his beard. Before he could disentangle, the strong poisonous smell made him dizzy and he fainted.

During his coma, Yusuf saw some strange things happen. First the child suddenly grew into a strong young bearded warrior then a Neel Ghoda (White Blue Horse) emerged from river Sindhu and Uderolal as young warrior jumped on to the horse's back. Then he saw an Angel like old bearded Saint coming out of the River and handing over a bright shining sword to the warrior who started moving towards Thatta. When Yusuf gained consciousness, he was perspiring profusely and his body was shaking. He saw the child playing in his cradle as before. He realized that the child was indeed not an ordinary one but was the God or Guru of the Hindus who will definitely and surely punish the Sultan. He bowed before the Child and pleaded for forgiveness as he said he was only carrying out the orders of the Sultan. He also requested that Uderolal meet the Sultan and guide him to the right path. Then he heard the voice as if Uderolal was saying that he will be soon coming to Thatta and meet the sultan. By this time, Ratan Rai had also returned with sweets and after exchanging pleasantries as if nothing had happened, Yusuf left for Thatta. There he narrated the entire episode to the Sultan. The advisors and Mullahs, as usual poooh pooohed him and said that the minister had been tricked and deserved to be punished for not being able to implement the plan.

The Sultan however had different views. He had also seen some strange things about the child in his dreams and some strange fear had overtaken him. He said he was prepared to wait for some more time but will definitely punish Yusuf Ahio if the Hindu's Guru did not appear before him soon, on the other hand Yusuf was confident that Uderolal will very soon come to Thatta. The Hindus of Thatta who had by now learnt about the experiences of Yusuf Ahio, posted themselves on the banks of Sindhu, expecting Uderolal Sain to appear any moment and hoping to have his Darshan.

Most harassed person however, was Yusuf Ahio who was worried not only about losing his job but was also afraid of the harsh punishment that might be meted out to him by the Sultan instigated

by the Mullahs. However Lal Sain, as Uderolal had come to be known by that time, did not let anyone down. A bright circle of light appeared in the middle of the river and a young bearded warrior emerged from water, seated on the back of a white-blue horse (Neal Ghoda) with a shining sword in his hand. Yusuf Ahio recognised the form as he had seen when he was in coma at Nasarpur. Lal Sain was accompanied by two other warriors on horse backs as his body guards and following them emerged from water a large army of soldiers armed with swords, spears, bows and arrows. There was no end to it.

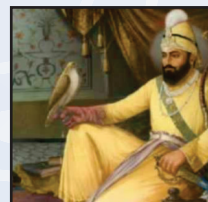


Seeing such a large army, Yusuf felt uneasy and panicked as he thought that the Sultan's entire army was no match for these soldiers. As Lal Sain reached the shore, Ahio greeted him respectfully and said that the Sultan had no intention of waging a war and that, being a misguided man he will come to terms with the Hindus by persuasion alone. He therefore requested that it was unnecessary to bring the army along. Lal Sain accompanied by two body guards and Ahio then proceeded towards the Sultan's palace. They were followed by the large mass of Hindus who gathered for Lal Sain's darshan and were shouting 'Ayo Lal, Jhulelal' and 'Lal Sain ki jai'.

The jubilant Hindus started dancing and singing bhajans and beating drums. When procession reached Sultan's palace, Yusuf Ahio went ahead and informed the Sultan about Lal Sain's arrival. He urged the Sultan to come out and greet the Hindu Guru personally. When Sultan came out, Lal Sain waived the crowd to disperse and also asked his two body guards to go back. The Sultan greeted Lal Sain with due respect befitting the messenger of the God and took Lal Sain inside. Marikh Shah then told Lal Sain that he learnt much about his super powers through his minister and though he did not believe that God himself could come to earth as an ordinary human being, he would believe that he was messenger of God like our own

Holy men, Walis and Oliyās who come for the good of the people.

Marikh Shah then went on singing praises of Islam which he said was the newest and most progressive of all religions and which had caught the imagination of all sensible persons in the world who had already embraced Islam in large numbers throughout the world. He said Hinduism is a very old and outdated religion with many contradictions and unbelievable myths and existence of many Gods in your religion, caused confusion rather than offer any salvation to its believers. It was therefore necessary to change the old order, discard Hinduism and other old 'isms' and accept Islam as the universal religion. It was with this idea that he had asked Hindus in the country to get converted to Islam so that the entire population could live in harmony and make progress as single nation under same religion. He had otherwise no bad intention or hatred for Hindus. He urged Lal Sain to use his influence and tell his followers to accept Islam gracefully in their interest and in the interest of the country as a whole. Lal Sain had not intervened and had allowed Marikh Shah to talk. When he had finished Lal Sain spoke thus 'oh Sultan', I am glad and pleased that you have such great respect for your religion. But you must realise that Hindus also have same respect for their religion.



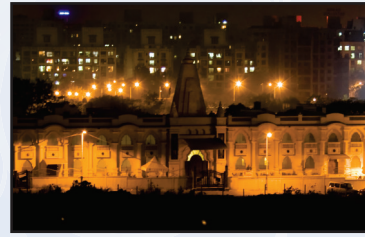
There is only one creator who created this universe, you may call him Allah or Ishwar or God or by any other name. He created all people alike. He made no distinction between Hindus, Muslims or any other people and He bestowed upon them the gifts of Air, Light and water also without any distinction. You breathe the same Air as Hindus breathe, you use same Light and drink same Water as Hindus drink, you as a ruler or head of the state are but a representative of Allah. So, it is your responsibility to act and treat all your subject equally irrespective of their religion, caste or creed.

You are a learned man, You have knowledge of your holy

scriptures and teachings of your prophet. Can you quote any verse from the Holy book that declares Islam as a superior religion than other religions or any firman which urges forcible conversion of people to Islam. I hope not because the Prophet preached harmony of religion, life and fought for equality of all people. There are so many religions in this world but the goal of all religions is the same. Everyone worships the Supreme Creator in his own way and according to his faith. And it is Islam which urges that if you want to please Khudapak then you must serve the people He has created. In other words the service of mankind is the Service to God. So, when you are harassing a section of the mankind who are also created by the same Allah, you are contravening the ideas of Islam and disregarding the teaching of your religion for which you are not going to be pardoned by Allah.

Marikh Shah was taken aback. He had not expected the Guru of Hindus to have knowledge of Islamic Holy book or the firmans and teachings of his religion. He had no point left for discussion So he excused himself to have consultation with his advisors who were waiting outside. The Mullahs were not prepared to relent and the hardline advisors suggested that the Guru of Hindus who was alone, be taken into custody and the Hindus made to convert to Islam under threat of torturing Guru in his captivity. Accepting their advise, Sultan asked his men to close all exits from the palace and ordered his soldiers to arrest the Guru of Hindus, Lal Sain had known the Sultan's intentions, so when Sultan's soldiers went to capture him, he had disappeared. The Sultan got every corner of his palace searched and when there was no trace of Lal Sain, he had every Hindu house in the town searched and sealed all roads leaving Thatta Nagar. He announced that Guru of Hindus had run away like a coward and therefore all Hindus get converted to Islam gracefully. Hindus did not believe that Lal Sain had run away. They rushed to the holy river Sindhu to pray and plead with Varun Dev for their protection. When they reach the banks of Sindhu, they found that a very big temple with spacious courtyard had suddenly sprung up there and Lal Sain was sitting on a golden throne at the head of the temple. He beckoned

them to bring their families along and take shelter in the temple. When Marikh Shah came to know about this, he got furious and ordered his soldiers to surround the temple, drag out all Hindus and beat them to death including their Guru. It was then, Lal Sain displayed his Holy Powers.



First he summoned the Agni Devta or the God of Fire. A ring of fire formed round the temple and flames fanned out to the army lines making the soldiers flee for life. The tongues of fire followed them and those who couldn't run fast were roasted alive. Then came Pawan Devta helped the flames to spread to the town of Thatta and burn the houses of Muslims only rendering them to heaps of ashes



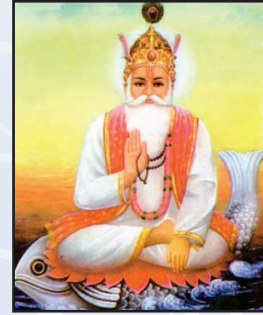
and cinders. The Muslim families rendered homeless came out to the open areas. When Marikh Shah saw this, he felt sorry for his foolish decision. He was in distress and did not know what to do. Seeing him in distress and in a repentant mood, Lal Sain allowed him time to think. He asked Agni Devta and Pawan Devta to calm down to allow Marikh Shah to relent and surrender. But Sultan had lost control over his senses and he had equally foolish advisors. They thought the Hindu's Guru had exhausted all his tricks and will now surrender to their pressure. So the sultan ordered his soldiers to attack again with full force. As the soldiers advanced and prepared to attack. Lal Sain as Varun Devta, acted himself, there was a loud thud and the banks of the river Sindhu burst, creating a big breach through which water rushed out so fast and furiously that all the soldiers got drowned and whole of the town of



Thatta got submerged. The Sultan and his advisors and Mullahs who had watched this Vinash leela, destruction from

the terrace of the palace with awe and fear, fell on their knees and cried out for mercy and pardon for their sins. Lal Sain waived his hand and

water receded. The Sultan and his party went to the temple, fell at the feet of Lal Sain and cried out 'Zinda Pir' 'ZindaPir' i.e. Live saint Live saint. They apologised profusely for their misdeeds and requested him to have mercy on them. They accepted Lal Sain as saint of both Hindus and Muslims and promised to behave well in future and treat Hindus and Muslims alike. Lal Sain gave them His blessings and with a wave of His hand, he restored everything to normal as before. All houses appeared in the town again and the soldiers who were supposed to be dead got to their feet. Then the temple which had appeared suddenly to shelter the Hindus disappeared immediately. Lal Sain having completed his mission expressed his desire to leave. The Sultan and the public both Hindus and Muslims requested him to stay with them for some time. Lal Sain said He had always been with them and will continue to be with them in the form of Jal (water) and Jyoti (Light). He urged them to build a new temple at that spot, keep an "Akhand Jyoti" (eternal flame) burning and distribute water to every Pyasa (Thirsty). So saying, Lal Sain disappeared in the waters of the Sindhu and the crowd shouted 'Zinda pir Uderolal, Ayo Lal Jhule Lal and Lal sain ki jai'. The sultan got a temple built at that site as desired by Lal sain and installed Akhand Jyoti and Hindus posted a pujari who gave Anchali (water from a jug) to the devotees and pilgrims who came there. This temple is till existing at Thatta even after one thousand years and is known by the name of **Khadda**. An annual fair is held and pilgrims, both Hindus and Muslims come from different parts of the Country.



While Lal Sain was doing his Avatari work at Thatta, he was very much present at Nasarpur as the lovely child Uderolal of Ratan Rai. His mundan ceremony was performed as per customs and when he was five years old, a learned pandit was nominated for his education. The pundit gave him instructions on religion and by the

time Uderolal was eight years old, he had read all the Vedas, Shastras and Puranas and perfected his knowledge of all religious Granths by welknown learned Vidwans. At this stage Ratan Rai thought of performing Udereolal's thread ceremony and wanted to select a proper Dharam Guru for giving him the Guru Mantra. One day while Ratan Rai accompanied by Uderolal, was walking on the banks of the river Sindhu, he saw a Rishi sitting there who looked very learned and pious.

He asked for the Rishi's advice regarding a Dharam Guru for his son. At that moment Guru Gorakh Nath was coming from the opposite direction. Seeing God Shiva in the guise of a Rishi, Gorakh Nath stopped to pay his respect to Lord Shiva. The Rishi (actually Lord Shiva in Rishi's guise) introduced Ratan Rai to Guru Gorakh Nath and told him that there was no better Guru than Gorakh Nath to give Guru Mantra to his son. By this time, Gorakh Nath had 1already recognised Uderolal as Varun Dev and asked lord Shiva whether it was necessary for the BOY to be given the Guru Mantra. Shiva said it was necessary to maintain the religious traditions for the sake of the common man who must learn to respect their religion, as that actually is the purpose of Varun Dev's mission here. So saying, Shiva disappeared while Guru Gorakh Nath performed the thread ceremony and gave Guru Mantra to Uderolal.

After the thread ceremony, mother Devaki gave a pot full of cooked gram to Uderolal to go and sell the gram and earn some money to supplement the family budget. It was the tradition that after the thread ceremony, the boy had to stand on his own feet, earn money and contribute his share to the family expenses. Uderolal took the cooked gram to the river, fed them to the creatures in the river and then collected some people round him and gave them lectures on religion. In the evening he returned home with the pot full of coins of various denominations. Mother Devaki was happy that on



the very first day all the gram was sold out and the sale had fetched very good returns, Same thing happened the next day. The mother got suspicious because the money brought was too much compared to the quantity of gram. She asked Ratan Rai to follow the boy lest he got involved in some illegal dealings. On the next day, Ratan Rai followed his son and watched his movements. Uderolal was aware of his father following him. In the evening, when both returned home separately, Uderolal took the initiative and faced his father. He told his father that he had been given education of very high religious standards and had acquired perfection in all the Vedas, Shastras and other holy books. All this knowledge will go waste if he did not share it with others. He would therefore like to devote time to educating people on religion. Ratan Rai and Ma Devaki agreed readily.

It became a daily routine for Uderolal to go to the river side and deliver lectures on religion. People got interested and young Uderolal's personality and his Vani (word) attracted large crowds who came to listen to the wise words. His name spread in no time and people from far off places came to visit him. Crowds kept swelling day by day. Uderolal would recite verses from Vedas, Shastras and other holy scriptures, explain their meaning and relevance to life. He gave introduction to various Gods mentioned in Hindu religious books and what they symbolised. People in thousands became his devotees.

Sant Pugar Rai, cousin brother of Uderolal, was his most devoted disciple. He was always seen along side Uderolal and took keen interest in his teachings. In a short time he became so proficient that he could give discourses on religion on his own and helped Uderolal in his work. One day, after the Pravachan when the devotees had dispersed, Uderolal asked Pugar Rai to follow him. When they reached the river, Uderolal took Pugar Rai's hand and entered the river. When they had reached mid-stream they went under water down below till they reached the bottom of the river. Here Pugar Rai saw a strange big Nagri (town-ship) and a large temple located therein. In temple he saw a Jyoti Kalash on a high platform with a

burning flame. Then Uderolal unfolded his identity and the mystery of his mission. He said he was *VARUN DEV - The God of Rivers*. People had drifted away from God and towards materialism. They remembered him only when they were in distress.



THE GOD VARUNA ON HIS MOUNT MAKARA

He came on earth because religion was under attack and the fanatics were out to wipe out Hinduism from this land. He had to revive awareness among people and to educate them on the importance of religion in day to day life. He had started the work but he could not stay indefinitely on earth. So he had chosen Pugar Rai to carry on the work, started by him and had specially trained him for this work. He told Pugar Rai that he had first approached his two brothers Soma Rai and Bhedu Rai to take over the work from him but they were not interested and preferred to remain in business and earn money. Then he told Pugar Rai that he was conferring on him the title of THAKUR. Hence forth he will be known as Thakur Pugar Dev and his disciples will henceforth worship Pugar Dev as their Guru. He then explained to Pugar Dev the mahima of Varun Dev. He said there were three basic elements necessary to sustain life. They were Air, Light (or Fire or Power) and Water. While Air was not visible and could only be felt, the other two elements were visible and could be seen by naked eye. They were therefore easily accessible for worship in their visible form. When you fix your eyes on an object and concentrate your mind on it, you are able to drive away evil thoughts from our mind and attain purity of soul and body. The new Darya Panth which has been launched is therefore to propagate and preach the worship of Jal (water) and Jyoti (Light) to the devotees. To help you carry out the mission I am giving you seven items which are symbolic of certain aspects of your mission. So saying, Uderolal gave the under mentioned seven items to Thakur Pugar Dev and explained their utility for him.

First was, JHARI, or the Kalash (Jug) containing water. He said

all life in any form depended on water for its very existence and was therefore sacred. When ever any devotee comes to you, you are supposed to give him ANCHLI from the KALASH which keeps him cool and his mind clear. It is a symbol of life.

The second item was "JYOTI KALASH, with Akhand Jyoti (eternal flame). This is symbolic of Fire or Maha Shakti, we get Oorja (power) through fire which runs the universe and in its smaller form, this flame in the Kalash gives us light, The light of Gyan or knowledge which wipes out the darkness or Agyan from our minds. Jal and Jyoti i.e. water and Fire/Light in their visible form are therefore things of worship.

The Third item was "KANTHA" or a piece of cloth made from cotton. He said by wearing this cloth, you will be free from bodily disease and will be able to keep good health.

The Fourth item was a "VEDH" (Ring) to be worn on one of his fingers. He said, after wearing this ring whatever you speak will come true and your spoken word will never miss its object.

The Fifth item was a big "DEG" (cooking vessel). He said the food cooked in this vessel will never fall short of the requirements and any number of people can be served at a time.

The Sixth item was a "DHAKLA" or Nagara i.e. a big drum. He said the sound emitting from this Dhakla will be carried to any distance and those who hear will be free from evil thoughts.

The Seventh item was "SWORD" with which one can keep inner and outer enemies away and protect himself against evil elements.

After making overall these items, Uderolal Sain told Pugar

Dev that if he followed his instructions, he will earn name and fame in the world and the new path of River worshipers will keep the awareness of religion alive amongst people. So saying, they came out of the water in the same way as they had entered.

Next day, Lal Sain informed his disciples and devotees that he intended to travel to other parts of the state and the country to propagate the ideals of Darya Panth, the relevance of religion in our life and the importance of the worship of Jal and Jyoti. He said he had nominated Pugar Rai to carry on the work of the Panth here and had conferred on him the title of THAKUR. He will perform all religious rites connected with the Panth. Lal Sain's devotees had already come to like Thakur Pugar Rai, for his humility, his clarity of mind and for the proficiency acquired by him on various religious matters and his extensive knowledge of Vedas, Shastras and other religious scriptures. Pugar Rai, in his own right was the most appropriate successor and choice for the work entrusted to him. Lal Sain's announcement was therefore greeted with Joy and all devotees of Lal Sain's gladly accepted him as their Guru. Lal Sain then told his parents of his intention to leave Nasarpur. They felt very sad. Though they had known that Uderolal was the incarnation of Varun Dev who had come on earth in human form for a specific purpose, they had come to love him as their own child and had developed affection for him like a son. Lal Sain told them he was only going on a tour but even so he will always be with them and they can feel his presence in Jal and Jyoti. Taking leave of his parents and other relatives and devotees he left. Lal Sain traveled extensively to various parts of Sind, Kutch, Marwar, Gujrat, Rajasthan, Punjab and Baluchistan. Wherever Lal Sain went people gathered in large numbers, crowds swelled day by day.

Thousands of men, women became his disciples. AKHAND JYOTI temples were established every where and Darya Panth became the Path of masses. Lal Sain also helped people in distress as is evident from the incidents cited here.

In those days, all trade was carried out by road or by river. Big passenger and cargo boats piled between various towns on the banks of river Sindhu. Once it so happened that a cargo boat carrying valuable materials belonging to a wealthy trader named Parmanand and plied by boatman Tahir got caught in a Bhanwar (midstream whirlpool) in river Sindhu off Bakhar islet between Sakkur and Rohri, the two important towns on opposite banks of the river in upper Sind. The boat started sinking due to strong downward pull. People on the banks looked on helplessly as nobody dared to go into the turbulent river. Parmanand and Tahir fell on their knees and prayed to Varun Dev for help.

Soon, they felt some mysterious hand pushing the boat upwards and away from the whirlpool. They were out of danger but another small island had suddenly appeared a little distance away from Bakhar island and Varun Dev as they had visualized was seated there.



People on the banks of the river also saw this miracle. They all instantly cried 'Jhulelal Beda Paari' fell at the feet of Jhulelal Sain and sought His blessings. Lal Sain asked them to build a temple on the new islet and install an Akhand Jyoti (eternal flame) burning there.

He disappeared after that. Parmanand with the help of other merchants built a temple and named it, '**Zinda peer**' or the temple of the living Saint. After over one thousand years, this temple is still existing. During Summer, when river Sindhu is generally in spate and water rises very high, some times inundating the villages on the banks of the river, the water does enter this island temple and also the Pujari states that after reaching the platform where Jyoti Kalash is kept, the water starts receding. At no time has the Jyoti Kalash got submerged. The pilgrims are taken from Bakhar island to the Zinda Peer temple by boats by the successive generations of Tahir Hussein, free of charge.

In another incident, Lal Sain came to the help of Fishermen of Manora, an off-shore island in the sea near Karachi Port. During the Shukul Pakshya (moonlight nights) the low lying areas of the island got flooded due to high tide and fishermen could not move out for their catch. Some times their Katcha houses also got swept away. Moreover, no potable water was available on this island and they had to bring water from the mainland and store it. The fishermen had always been the worshipers of Varun Dev. Now, when they learnt that Varun Dev had descended on earth in human form, they prayed and cried for help. Lal Sain appeared on the island and assured his devotees that in future their houses will be safe and the sea will remain calm enough to allow them to move out for fishing. Then he marked two parallel lines on earth with his spear and asked fishermen to dig a well at that spot. This well produced sweet potable water. Then Lal Sain asked them to build a temple of Akhand Jyoti there, so that the well was within the premises of the temple. Lal Sain disappeared. The fishermen built the temple as desired by Lal Sain. This temple and the well are still existing and pilgrims from far off places visit this place regularly.

While Lal Sain was away from Nasarpur, Thakur pugar Dev was doing his work ably with missionary zeal and his fellowship kept increasing. He had built a temple for the devotees to offer prayers and listen to his discourses. People came from far and near. The offerings by the devotees in cash and valuables kept pouring in. Seeing so much wealth coming in the form of offerings, the two brothers of Lal Sain namely Soma Rai and Bhedu Rai got jealous and quarreled with Pugar Dev. They argued that the devotees who brought the offerings were the disciples of their brother Uderolal and therefore they were the rightful claimants. Thakur Pugar Dev told them that the offerings belonged to no one as they were being utilized for the propagation of the Panth and for providing facilities for the pilgrims who came in large numbers from distant places. The money was therefore nobody's personal property. When the

two brothers were adamant and threatened Pugar Dev with dire consequences if he did not make over the cash and gifts to them, Lal Sain suddenly appeared before them. Soma Rai and Bhedu Rai were taken aback by Lal Sain's sudden appearance and felt ashamed and guilty. Lal Sain told them that it was only after they had declined to look after the Panthik work that he had nominated Pugar Dev as his successor and Sanchalak of the Panth. It will remain like that and after Pugar Dev, it will be his heirs i.e. his children and their children who will succeed to the Gaddi for all the generations to come.

Moreover, as Pugar Dev has told you, the income from the temple through offerings by devotees in cash and kind is no one's personal property. It is to be used for the spread and propagation of the Panth and for helping people in distress. Even so, Pugar Dev and his family were very simple people and their personal needs were very few. They were not money crazy longing for riches. So the treasury was safe in his hands" Lal Sain then told his brothers that in case they were really interested and if they genuinely wanted to work for the Panth, then they may also perform religious functions and give Anchali from a Kalash to the devotees. They will also be known as THAKURS and devotees will come to them. They must however not interfere in anyway with the work of Thakur Pugar Dev. The two brothers who had already been impressed and convinced of the idea of the Darya Panth agreed to Lal Sain's suggestion and started working on their own. Lal Sain stayed in Nasarpur for some time. He was satisfied with the zeal and dedication to the work of the Panth by Pugar Dev who commanded utmost respect among the disciples.

After some time Lal Sain's mother, who was ailing for some time passed away and soon after, his father also left this world. Lal Sain and his brothers performed their last rites according to Vedic customs. After the mourning period was over, Lal Sain told Pugar Dev that he wanted to establish a place of worship which will be common for Hindus and Muslims, the two religious communities in the country in those days. While the Hindu religion was no more in

danger of being wiped out by Marikh Shah or any other Muslim rulers in the near future, it was necessary that the two religious communities co-exist with mutual respect for each other's religion and live in peace and harmony. His idea was that the proposed place of worship should serve as an example of equality of all religions. Lal Sain set out in search of suitable land for the proposed place of worship. He was accompanied by his nephew, Kodan Rai who was almost of his own age. After a few days travel they came upon a piece of green land near village Jiheja, with a Well there on. Lal Sain liked this place and on enquiry he was told that the land belonged to a Muslim Sheikh Memon who was at that time working on the field.

Lal Sain as Uderolal was only twelve years old then and so was Kodan Rai. Sheikh Mernon thought they were joking and reprimanded them for being disrespectful to elders. He therefore asked Lal Sain to first show him money before he could talk about the deal. Lal Sain drew two lines on the land, with his spear, where they were standing, borrowed a pick axe from the Sheikh and dug about half a foot deep pit. There they saw a brass pot buried. Lal Sain opened the lid and showed Sheikh the enormous money in gold and silver coins in the pot. He told him to take as much money as he wanted as compensation for the land and the well thereon. Sheikh Memon had heard many stories about the mysterious child with mysterious powers at Nasarpur who was supposed to be the Hindu's God and who has defeated Marikh Shah with his mysterious powers. He now realised that the child before him was none other than the Hindu's God. He apologised for his behaviour and then wanted to know the purpose for which the land was needed. When Lal Sain told him about the proposed place of worship he intended to build, the Sheikh felt honoured that his land will be used for such a noble cause. He however wanted to consult his wife before making any commitment. So he went home. The day was hot and it was noon time. Kodam Rai suggested they move somewhere under shade till Sheikh Memon returns, as there was no tree near by.

Lal Sain picked up a dry branch of a tree, made a hole in the ground with his spear and struck the branch in the hole. In a moment a big tree appeared on the spot and both of them sat under its shade. By that time Sheikh Menon also returned with his wife. Perhaps she had doubts about her husband's story and wanted to see the Hindu's God herself. Seeing a big tree suddenly appear on their land where not even a small bush existed a short while ago, the begum was more than convinced that the child who had performed such a miracle was indeed a Saint and Allah's man. They said they were honoured by Lal Sain's offer to use their land for a noble cause and will accept no money for it. More over, they were quite old now and had no children. We are not sure what will happen to our land when we die; perhaps some influential Zamindar will grab it, we would rather see it being used in our life time for building a holy shrine there. Sheikh Memon had however one condition. That was, that he be allowed to serve at the Dargah as a Mujawar so that he spent his last days in the service of God and in case he is blessed with a son, he should be allowed to succeed him, Lal Sain was then pleased with the Sheikh's offer to give away his land free of cost and he also appreciated Sheikh's desire to work as Mujawar at the shrine.



Lal Sain then put his hands on the heads of the couple and said that with his blessings they will have a son even at this age who will be their heir and successor to the Mujawarship after Memon's death and his future generation will continue to enjoy the privilege so that the example set by him is remembered for ever. Lal Sain allowed Sheikh Memon to keep the well and a bit of the surrounding land for his livelihood till the shrine comes up and he takes over the Mujawarship.

The news of Lal Sain is coming to the village of Jiheja and his plans about a Sarva Dharma (all religions) shrine for worship by people of both religions spread to the neighboring areas and within no time people in large numbers came to have Lal Sain's Darshan and

to listen to his Pravachan (religious lectures) which were carried out under the big tree planted by Lal Sain. The tree was named **Manikataro** and is still existing. The construction work started in right earnest and with the mass help from devotees, whose number kept on swelling, a Sabhagrah or a lecture hall was ready in a few days time. This hall is known as **Kutchery** and is still existing near the **Manikataro** tree. The religious discourses and lectures were thereafter held in the Kutchery Hall and people belonging to both religions came to listen. The main theme used to be communal harmony and coexistence of all religions.

The Sinhasan on a raised chair on which Lal Sain sat is still there and Lal Sain's wooden sandals are kept by the Sinhasan. A few yards away from this site, a deep well was dug and named as **Balambho**. This well is also still existing. No one has ever been able to measure its depth till date and it has never dried up. The water has a peculiar smell and taste and is known to have medicinal qualities for all types of diseases. The devotees of Lal Sain use this water instead of Ganga Jal for performing religious rites and at the time of death, a few drops of water from this well are put in the dying person's mouth. It is kept handy by all devotees of Darya Panth. When all these works were complete, Lal Sain sent a message to Thakur Pugar Dev and his brothers at Nasarpur to come. When they arrived, Lal Sain collected all his devotees and relatives and announced that he had completed his mission and it was now time for him to leave. He urged them not to mourn or grieve on his departure. He said in order to keep the religious tradition and ethics of public life alive and to defeat the forces of evil, God comes to earth in human form as Avatar. Such Avatars come from time to time, complete their mission and depart. There is nothing unusual. I have conveyed the message of religious harmony, universal brotherhood and mutual love and respect for each others ideas and beliefs. I have also explained to you the importance and usefulness of **Jal** (water) and **Jyoti** (light) in life and shown you the way to true worship. You have to propagate the ideas of the Darya Panth and establish temples at every place. Thakur Pugar

Dev to whom I have nominated as the Sanchalak, will be your Guide and Guru and after him, his heirs will take over and continue the work for generations to come.

After delivering his last message, Lal Sain struck his spear in the earth and a wide opening appeared. Lal Sain disappeared into the opening along with his Neel Ghoda and the opening patched up immediately. This day was the Hindu month of **Bhadra** (Bhado) Sudi Chaudas of Vikram Samwat 1020. Thakur Pugar Dev felt very sad at this sudden happening. Lal Sain's brothers and other devotees consoled him and suggested building a suitable Samadi (memorial) at the spot where Lal Sain had disappeared. The news of Lal Sain's departure was also conveyed to Sultan Marikh Shah who immediately despatched his chief Minister to Jiheja with instructions to make arrangements for constructions of a Mazar (grave).

Thus a dispute arose between Thakur Pugar Dev and the chief Minister as to the nature of memorial. When Marikh Shah came to know of this, he came to Jiheja himself. He suggested that they leave it to Lal Sain himself to resolve the matter. So Marikh Shah, Pugar Dev and all those who were present offered mass prayer and called out to Lal Sain for guidance, they soon heard Lal Sain's voice. It said that there was nothing to quarrel about as he belonged to both the religions. There was in fact no difference between a Samadhi or a Mazat. You may call it by any name you like and both Hindus and Muslims will have equal access and freedom to worship there. While Pugar Dev and his successors will have the overall control of the entire shrine, including the Mazat/Samadhi, Sheikh Memon and his successors will work as Mujawars there. Across this shrine there will be a Jyoti temple where Akhand Jyoti (eternal flame) will keep burning. These two places will be opposite each other and the space in between will be the common place of worship or people of both faiths. Thus, getting the matter resolved by Lal Sain himself, Marikh Shah sent his engineers and workers to design and construct the memorial as per wishes of Lal Sain. The whole area was circled by a high wall making the premises look like a fort. In due course, Sheikh

Memon's wife gave birth to a son. Thus Sheikh's successors still work as Mujawars to this day and Thakur Pugar Dev's successors continue to look after the overall upkeep and maintenance of the shrine. They have a full time resident Pujari to look after the day to day work since Thakurs do not stay on the premises. An annual fair is held on "**Cheti-Chand**" where pilgrims belonging to all religions come. Various panchayats in Sindh, Kutch, Gujrat, Marwar etc. contribute to the upkeep of the shrine though large portion comes from offerings from the devotees.

### **Pugar Dev and Ammu Bai**

Thakur Pugar Dev was respected and revered by his disciples and was worshiped like a saint by the devotees of Lal Sain. He spread the message of Darya Panth and his follower ship extended not only to Sind but also to the neighbouring states of Kutch, Gujrat, Marwar, Rajasthan, Punjab and Baluchistan. While his name and fame was spreading Pugar Dev himself was a worried man as there was no heir to succeed to the Gaddi. His wife Nirmala Devi was physically not in a position to bear him children. The worry was literally eating him when his devotees suggested second marriage for him in order to fulfill the wishes of Lal Sain who had ordained that his children (and their children) will succeed to the Gaddi. His wife Nirmala Devi also agreed to this idea and she herself actually selected a suitable spouse for him. Pugar Dev bowed to the wishes of his wife and his disciples and the wedding was performed according to Vedic rites. After the wedding ceremony, Thakur Pugar Dev took his second wife to the Jyoti Mandir for Lal Sain's blessings. As they both bowed before the Jyoti Kalash, Lal Sain suddenly appeared before them. Lal Sain told Pugar Dev that the Lady whom he had brought as his wife is no more his wife as their relationship as husband and wife was restricted to their performances of wedding rites only. He said she is actually Amba Devi the universal mother or the Jagat Janini and will remain so far, for the rest of her life and that Pugar Dev must also touch her feet and treat her as mother Jagat Janini. Pugar Dev carried out Lal Sain's orders but could not understand what they meant and why.

Lal Sain solved the mystery for him and told him of an incident of his previous birth. He said, a Sadhu who had lived all his life in forests and performed Tapasia, once strayed into a city and saw a long procession where in a young man wearing shining Silken Clothes and decorated with fine jewellery was sitting on the back of a horse preceded by musicians playing Shehnai, Dholak and other instruments and people dancing round them and followed by many more people in joyous mood singing songs. He was very impressed by this scene and asked one of the professionals as to what was happening. The man told him man on the horse back was called Dulha (Bridegroom) who was going to get married and we were all baratees his friends and relatives. The Sadhu said he too wanted to be a Dulha. The man took the sadhu to the Raja (Head of the city council) and apprised him of the Sadhu's desire. In those days, the Sadhus and Saints were considered as God's men who were not only respected but were feared as well and whose every wish had to be carried out. The Raja therefore offered his own daughter in marriage to the Sadhu. The Sadhu was lodged in the state Guest House and his wedding costumes and jewellery were prepared. Next day, the Sadhu was taken round the city in a procession with all the Pomp and glory, accompanied by music, dance and singing. He was very pleased and happy when Barat reached its destination, the music stopped and the Sadhu was asked to get off the horse back. He refused to get down and asked to continue the music and dance as that was what he had actually wished for. The baratees explained to him that they had reached the bride's place and that he had to get down and to the wedding mandap for performance of the wedding rites. The Sadhu got down, threw away the wedding garments and jewellery and wearing his own Lango (Lion cloth) left for the jungle as he said he was not interested in marriage as he was a Sanyasi and Tapasavi.

After narrating this incident, Lal Sain told Pugar Dev that he (Pugar Dev) was that Sadhu in his previous birth and, pointing to Ama Bai, she was his would be bride. After your departure from the wedding mandap, she refused to get married to anyone else she said

she had accepted you as her husband. She spent rest of her life in the service of the mankind, helping the distressed and finally underwent intense Tapasia till she achieved the status of Jagat Janani Amba. However, her wish to formally get married to the Sadhu by proper Vedic rites, remained unfulfilled so that she had to take this Birth. Now, with the performance of your wedding rites, that wish has been fulfilled and she has to be worshiped and treated as Jagat Janani Amba. Pugar Dev then touched the feet of his 'wife' and called her Amma Bai. All the devotees also accepted her in that status.

Thakur pugar Dev then sought Lal Sain's guidance as to the heir and successor to the Gaddi to take over the sanchalan of the Panth after him, Lal Sain said like sheikh Mernon and his wife, pugar Dev and Nirmala Devi will have a son even at this stage with his blessings and he will succeed to the Gaddi. So saying, Lal Sain disappeared. Pugar Dev went to live with his first wife Nirmala Devi and in due course they were blessed with a son '**Amarditta Rai**'. Amma Bai named the child as **Budda Sahibas** as he was born to his parents in old age. Soon after giving birth to Budda Sahib, Nirmala Devi passed away and the child was brought up by Amma Bai. After his wife's death, Pugar Dev expressed his desire to leave this world. He asked Amma Bai to take over the Sanchalan of the Panth herself and when Budda Sahib grows up, the Gaddi should be made over to him. Thakur Pugar Dev then went to the river Sindh, entered the water and took Jal Samadhi. Amma Bai was respected and worshiped like a Goddess by all the devotees. Even today, Lal Sain's devotees take out Amma Bai's share before distributing Parshad at the time of Beharana. At the Akhand Jyoti Mandir in the Lal Sain Dargah at Jiheja and additional Jyoti Kalash with eternal flame dedicated to Amma Bai is kept in her memory. Amma Bai arranged for Budda Sahib's religious education through competent pandit and under her able guidance he learnt all the Vedas and Shastras and became proficient in matters relating to the Darya Panth. After Budda Sahib's thread ceremony, Amma Bai called a convocation of the devotees and announced that time had come for her to depart.

The Gadi was formally made over to Budda Sahib in a sort of coronation ceremony and, taking leave of her devotees, Amma Bai went to the river Sindhu and, like Thakur Pugar Dev she also had a dip in the waters of Sindhu and disappeared. During Budda Sahib's time, the Panth made tremendous progress and spread to far off places. Due to lack of adequate transport and communication facilities in those days, it became physically difficult for Budda Sahib to keep in touch with his disciples and attend to their religious needs. It became necessary to decentralise his work. He had three sons and allocated separate areas to each one of them, keeping their headquarters in the respective areas. The eldest son Thakur Meherchand was posted at Sehwan, a very flourishing town in those days on the left bank of river Sindhu and almost in the centre of Sind. The second son Thakur Masara Lal was posted at Shikarpur in the northern part of Sind while the third and the youngest son Thakur Jugaldas went to Multan which was a part of Sind in those days and is now in Punjab. After the partition of India in 1947 A.D., all the memorials in Sindh dedicated to Lal Sain went under Pakistan and are not accessible to the Sindhi Hindus who migrated to India in large numbers. All the same, Jhulelal Sain and will continue to remain for all the times to come as the Isht Dev of Sindhi Society wherever they are so long as they preserve and maintain their identity.



**Jeko chavando jhulelal  
Tanhija thenda bera paar  
Aayo Laal Jhulelal  
Lal ja jhati chavo Jhulelal**



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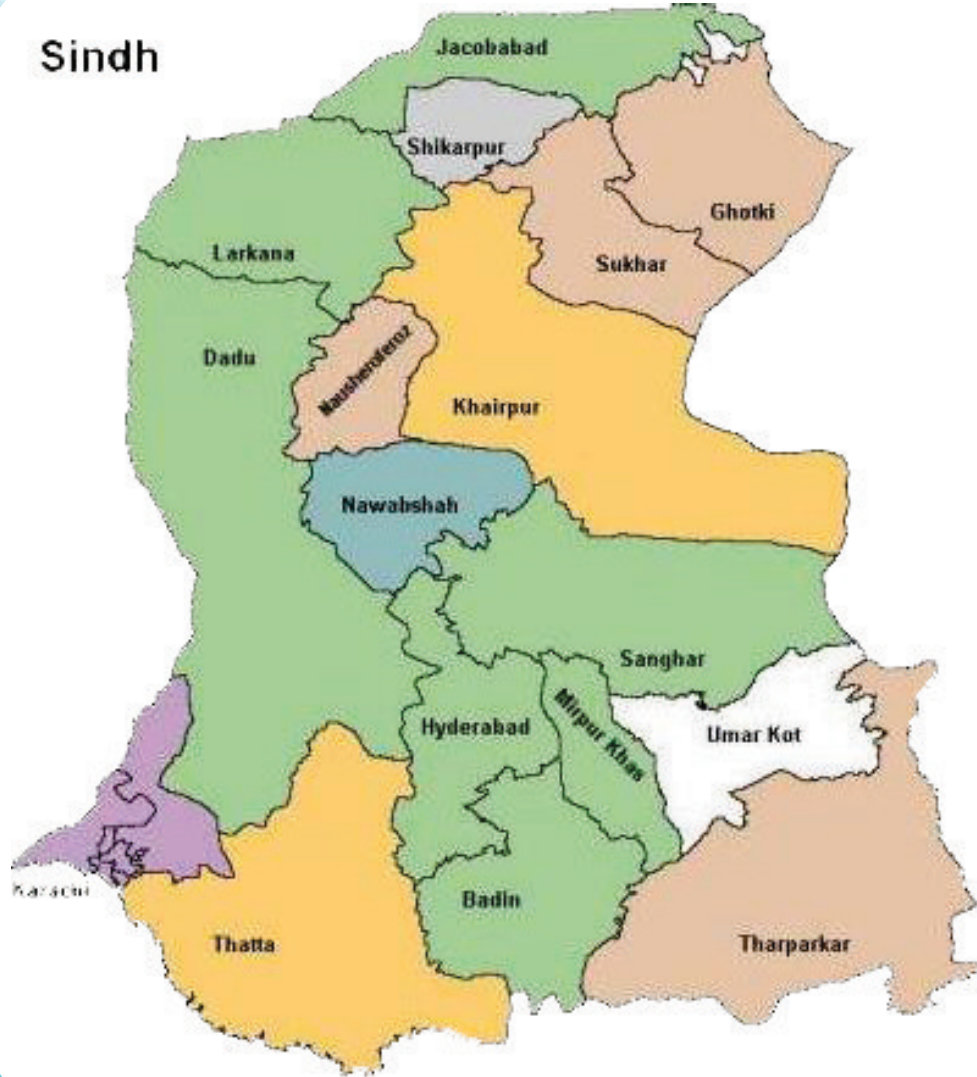
**Vinayak Prints**

**No. 1 Bajanai Koil Street Kannammamet,**

**T. Nagar, Chennai - 600 017.**

**Ph : 044 - 4286 8104 Mobile : 98841 18089.**

## Sindh



**HIRALAL.B.JETHWANY**

E-Mail: [hira5555@yahoo.com](mailto:hira5555@yahoo.com)

Ph: +91 98400 94520

Chennai

